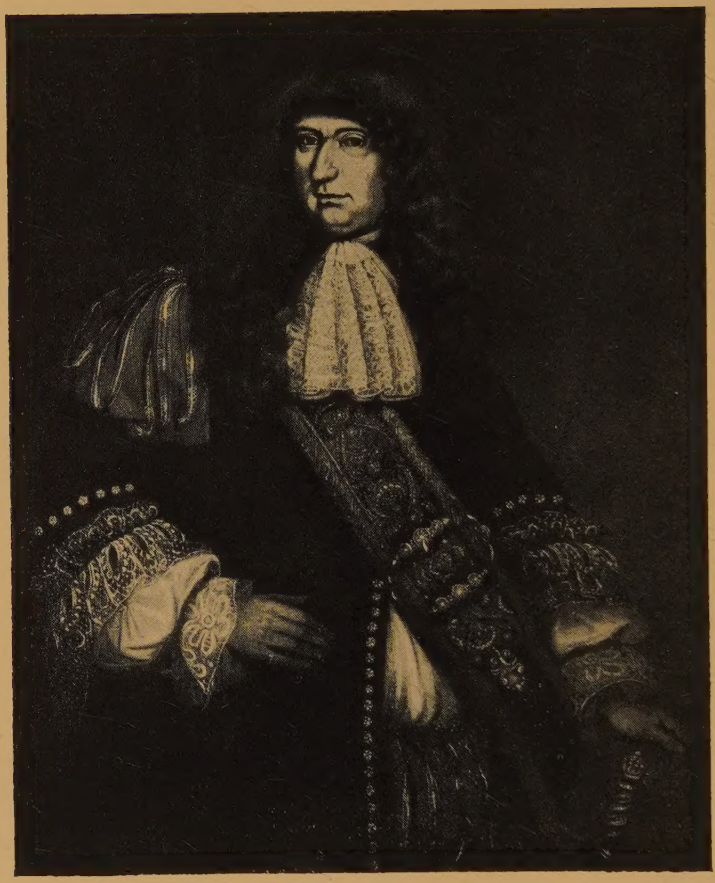
THE GODFATHER OF DOWNING STREET



SIR GEORGE DOWNING
1623–1684

Frontispiece

THE GODFATHER OF DOWNING STREET

SIR GEORGE DOWNING 1623–1684

AN ESSAY IN BIOGRAPHY

BY

JOHN BERESFORD

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To the Memory

of

Two Great Historians

Edward Earl of Clarendon

(*Sometime Lord High Chancellor of England*)

and

Thomas Babington Lord Macaulay

I *Dedicate this Book*

234359
22D47 Jewell g.

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PREFACE

SIR GEORGE DOWNING, as a subject for Biography, has always attracted me since I first made his acquaintance at a Cabinet Meeting in Lord Clarendon's bedroom at Worcester House in October, 1665. It is not affectation to speak thus, for the vigour and brilliance of Clarendon's account made me feel as though I had myself witnessed all that happened on that occasion. Therefore I determined to know more about Sir George Downing. After probing further, and specially after reading the scholarly notice of his life in J. L. Sibley's *Biographical Sketches of Graduates of Harvard University*, and the later excellent article by Sir Charles Firth in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, I came to the conclusion that Sir George Downing—sometime Cromwell's Scoutmaster-General, Ambassador at the Hague under both Cromwell and Charles II, Secretary to the Treasury, above all, unique personality—abundantly deserved a full-dress Biography.

I do not know if this book can claim to be a full-dress Biography, but it can, perhaps, claim to be an Essay in Biography : as such I present it to the reader.

The materials for a life of Sir George Downing are certainly sufficiently numerous : indeed, I have sometimes despaired, in the very limited time at my disposal for research, of ever cutting a path through the forest of original documents whether printed or still in manuscript. I have, of course, everywhere indicated in footnotes my various authorities, but it is right that I should here summarize the most important of them.

They are these :

(1) The Winthrop and Downing letters, notable for

their domestic interest, printed in R. C. Winthrop's *Life and Letters of John Winthrop*, and principally in various volumes of the invaluable *Massachusetts Historical Society's* publications.[1]

(2) The very numerous letters from George Downing to Secretary Thurloe between 1655 and 1659, printed in Volumes III to VII of the *Thurloe State Papers*—specially in Volumes VI and VII.

(3) The still more numerous manuscript letters to Clarendon, to Secretary Nicholas, and to Secretary Bennet, between 1661 and 1665, to be found respectively (*a*) among the Clarendon Papers in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, (*b*) in the Egerton MSS. 2537 and 2538 in the British Museum, and (*c*) in the Public Record Office, amongst State Papers Foreign, Holland.

(4) The miscellaneous correspondence addressed to Downing at any time between 1658 and 1682, together with various documents whether political, diplomatic or domestic contained in the Additional MSS., in the British Museum 22,919 and 22,920.

(5) The manuscript letters relating to Downing's last Diplomatic Mission of January to February 1672 in the Public Record Office, S.P.F. Holland, Letters and Papers 188.

(6) The many-volumed printed Calendars (*a*) of State Papers Domestic, (*b*) of Treasury Books, (*c*) of Colonial Papers.

(7) Various MSS.—Downing's *Journal* for the greater part of 1658 which I tracked down in a Country House in Norfolk, and miscellaneous letters in the Egerton and Sloane manuscripts in the British Museum.

In view of the fact that the Downing letters to Clarendon in the Bodleian Library were thoroughly examined by Lister for his *Life of Clarendon*, by Leopold von Ranke for his *History of England*, and relatively recently by the Dutch

[1] I received from the *Massachusetts Historical Society* full permission to reproduce any letters I liked, accompanied by a very charming letter from Dr. Worthington C. Ford, wishing me success in my undertaking. Nothing could exceed the kindness I have received from America.

Historian Dr. Japikse for his book on the complications preceding the second Dutch War, and particularly of the fact that a large number of these letters in whole or in part have been printed by Lister and by Dr. Japikse, I have not myself examined the original Bodleian manuscripts. Similarly I have not been through the letters to Secretary Bennet in the Public Record Office because Dr. Japikse (for his work referred to above), and Dr. Colenbrander (for his wonderful collection of documents relating to the Dutch Sea-Wars) have been exhaustively through them, and published a very considerable selection. In these cases I have been content to master the printed selections from these originals.[1]

Otherwise I have explored the various manuscripts themselves, and numerous letters and documents, in whole or in part, are here printed for the first time.

The printed and manuscript documents referred to above are the raw material for the Biographer or Historian of Downing and his time. But in addition to this raw material the Biographer has also to his hand the finished material provided by such eminent contemporary Historians as Clarendon in England, and Wicquefort in Holland. Clarendon in his *Continuation*, and Wicquefort in his *Histoire des Provinces Unies*, constantly refer to Downing whom they both cordially disliked. Still, Downing was a being so extraordinary that happily they could not keep their pens off him.

Of contemporary Diaries the most important are those of the incomparable Pepys, and, earlier, for Downing's doings in Cromwell's Parliaments, of the devoted Burton : for the Commons Debates after 1667, there is Anchitell Grey.

There are, of course, numerous references to Downing in the letters of various of Louis XIV's Ambassadors—particularly of D'Estrades—and of the great Dutch Statesman, De Witt.

[1] For his *Bescheiden uit Vreemde Archieven omtrent de Groote Nederlandsche Zeeoorlogen*, 1652–1676 (2 vols., 1919), Dr. Colenbrander has virtually ransacked the archives of the Capitals of Europe.

As I have pointed out elsewhere in this book (see Chapter Thirteen), the Biographer of any individual of the later part of this period is terribly hampered by the fact that there is no adequate modern history of Charles II's reign, such as Gardiner and Firth have accomplished for Charles I's reign and for the Cromwellian period, and Macaulay for the Revolution. For this reason I have been compelled to concentrate more attention on the general and particular antecedents and causes of the second and third Dutch Wars than I otherwise should have done had there been any detailed historical background to be found elsewhere.[1] As it is, for the causes of the second Dutch War, Lister's *Clarendon*, written nearly a century ago, contains the most detailed account in English known to me. But Lister examined the causes of the War mainly from the Clarendonian aspect, and since then the diligence of Dutch Historians has unearthed much new material. I have, therefore, endeavoured to explain, at any rate in rather more detail than will, I think, be found elsewhere in English the various causes of those conflicts.

I must express my deep gratitude to my friend, Dr. W. A. Shaw, the distinguished editor of the *Calendar of Treasury Books* who, it is not too much to say, by his researches has re-established the character of Charles II on one of the firmest of all foundations—financial facts and figures. But for Dr. Shaw's many-volumed *Calendar of Treasury Books*, his brilliant prefaces thereto, and his occasional essays, my chapter on the Treasury could not possibly have been written.

I must also record my gratitude to Sir Charles Firth, not merely for his most excellent notice of Downing in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, but for his personal help in directing me to various invaluable sources. To Professor Geyl, Professor of Dutch History in the University of London, I am greatly indebted. Not only did he endeavour to lighten my darkness in the matter of

[1] The *Cambridge Modern History* is invaluable for a general background, but it obviously cannot go into detail.

Dutch by reading with me and giving me some understanding of Dr. Japikse's distinguished book, *De Verwikkelingen tusschen de Republiek en Engeland van* 1660–1665, but he introduced me to various authorities, he lent me various books, and above all he emphasized the importance of the Orange and Stewart complications, which explain so much in Anglo-Dutch relations in the seventeenth century.

If I have also emphasized English grievances against the Dutch in the seventeenth century, Professor Geyl will, I know, forgive me. The truth is that the pro-Dutch sympathies—I might almost say prejudices—of Bishop Burnet and Sir William Temple have somewhat obscured the real situation. To speak, as some writers are apt to do, as though Charles II and Louis XIV were schoolboy bullies of the small Republic over the sea, is to distort history. Charles and Louis attacked the Dutch because they profoundly feared and distrusted them. The Dutch between 1660 and 1672 were the most powerful nation in Europe—for three simple reasons : they had Sea-Power, they had boundless wealth, and they had a far higher level of intelligence and civilization than any other people in the world. Had it not been so they could not possibly have emerged, substantially unscathed, from the war with Charles II of 1672–4 and with Louis XIV of 1672–8.

Finally I must thank Professor Colenbrander, of Leyden University, for directing me to certain unpublished letters of Downing to Williamson in the Public Record Office, Mr. G. H. Gurney, Keswick Hall, Norwich, for so kindly lending me the portion of Sir George Downing's MS. Journal in his possession, the Rev H. W. P. Stevens, Tadlow Vicarage, Royston, for various local details of Downing property, Mr. F. J. Cox and Mr. G. E. Manwaring, of the London Library, for help which only good librarians can render, and Viscount Dillon for permission to reproduce his portraits of the Earl and Countess of Litchfield at Ditchley.

As to the frontispiece portrait of Sir George Downing a word is necessary. I tracked it down to the possession of Mr. Frederic Winthrop, Groton House, Hamilton, Massachusetts.[1] Mr. Winthrop is, of course, a direct descendant of the Governor John Winthrop who figures prominently in the early part of this book. It is needless to say that Mr. Winthrop's kindness in allowing me to reproduce this portrait, and in giving me the fullest information in his possession as to the tradition connected with it has been as sincere and complete as one would expect from a descendant of the magnanimous Governor of Massachusetts. The portrait has been handed down in the Winthrop family together with numerous other family portraits from father to son[2] : the first two chapters of this book will explain why the Winthrops should possess a portrait of Sir George Downing. The surprising thing is that the only known portrait of Sir George Downing should be in America, for it seems probable that a man of his eminence in his own day must have been painted more than once. No doubt the extinction of the family in the male line after the death of the Fourth Baronet, and the prolonged wrangle over the property which ensued before Downing College was founded, account for the disposal of much of the first Sir George's personal property. Perhaps the reproduction of this picture will lead to the identification of others.

JOHN BERESFORD.

86, Lansdowne Road,
Holland Park, W.11,
January 30, 1925.

[1] Mr. J. D. Milner, the Director of the National Portrait Gallery, kindly called my attention to the fact that this portrait had been reproduced in an American Portrait Book, *The Founders, Portraits of Persons born abroad who came to the Colonies in North America before the year* 1701, by Charles Knowles Bolton (2 vols., 1919). It was thus that I heard of the picture, and got in touch with its owner.

[2] Mr. R. C. Winthrop, the scholarly biographer of John Winthrop, thought that no portrait of Downing existed. It is odd that he should not have been aware that his cousin possessed this very portrait.

CHAPTER ONE

BEGINNINGS

> While with an eye made quiet by the power
> Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
> We see into the life of things.
>
> —WORDSWORTH : *Tintern Abbey*, ls. 48–50.

OF all the streets of all the cities in the world, none is better known by name than Downing Street. Nevertheless, among the millions who have heard of it, among the thousand persons who daily glance up at its superscription as they pass to and fro down Whitehall, very few have the least idea why the street is called so. And even the few who have heard of Sir George Downing would remember little more than that his character was reputed to be unpleasant, or more plainly, that he was, as his sometime clerk and acquaintance Samuel Pepys described him, " a perfidious rogue."

The extent to which the unfavourable reputation of Sir George Downing is justified will be very carefully set forth hereafter. Meanwhile it will be well to emphasize at once that the name of Downing, both before the day of Sir George and after it, has associations of honour, memories to be cherished as not unworthy of the high destiny to which the locality identified with it has, in process of time, been called. For the name can conjure up memories of pleasant life in Suffolk in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, of country peace at Groton in the same county both in Elizabethan days and in the earlier part of the seventeenth century ; a little later, of arduous adventure over the ocean

in the youthful years of New England. Above all, the name is memorable as belonging to a family which, consistently through two centuries, manifested a practical belief in the absolute value of Learning.

Whether the Downing family originally came from Norfolk has not, I believe, been definitely ascertained. This, at least, is certain, that from the early years of Queen Elizabeth's reign they are firmly established in Suffolk. From the will of Sir George Downing's great-grandfather also George Downing, it is clear that the family were then settled at Beccles, in that county. And, from this early will which was made in 1561, a salient characteristic of the family appears. "John and George my sonnes," says great-grandfather Downing, "to go to the grammer schole, and then to the Universitie of Cambridge." Accordingly to Cambridge goes grandfather George Downing, matriculating as a pensioner from Queen's College, at Michaelmas, 1569. In 1577 he takes his M.A. degree from Corpus Christi College, returns thereafter to Ipswich and from 1589 to 1610 is Master of Ipswich Grammar School. In 1611 he made his will and died in the same year. As this document will introduce the reader in the twinkling of an eye to an Ipswich schoolmaster and his family three hundred years ago, I give it in full.

Will of George Downing. 1611.

George Downynge of Ipswiche, Scholemaster. Firste I commytt my sowle to my blessed Saviour Christe Jesus who hath redemed it with his precious bloudd. And my Bodye I commytt to Christian Buryall with assured ꝑsuation that he will rayse it upp at ye laste daye from death to eternal lyfe, because he dyed for it, & rose again to justifie it.

As for the seate & staye of mync howse, landes, goods & movables I give full aucthoritie to Susan Downynge, Nahomie Downynge and Abigale Downynge, my three daughters, to sell my howse & tenements with the gardanis, orchardes & all that doeth belonge thereto, with the welles Passages by both the back gates, to the value of eight skoare & tenn powndes.

All the rest of my goodes to my foresaid three daughters to be

equally devyded amongst themselves. I give my three daughters the lease of the howse I now dwell in, being called the white Friars, being the Free howld of William Hill of London Merchaunt, whereof there is Fower powndes a year will aryse cleare, the Rente being paide.

I give unto Joseph Downinge all my bookes at home & at Cambridge, saving my twoo howsehold bybles with tenne of my cheif bookes at home, whiche I will give my three daughters.

I give Nahomie my dañske cheste whiche standeth in the somm' plour uppon the dauñsk cheste.

I will and give full aucthoritie to my three daughters to receive and paye all my debtes, & whatsoever is left shall be therse. I have made my three daughters, Susan, Nahomie and Abygull my sole & only excutrix ; this xviith of Januarie Anno Dñi 1610 [11].

Proved at Ipswiche 3 October 1611 and Administration granted to Nahomie one of the daughters.[1]

Although in this will the Ipswich Schoolmaster was thinking mainly of his daughters he had several sons, among them Emmanuel, who was baptized at St. Laurence, Ipswich, on August 12, 1585. Probably he owed his beautiful name to Emmanuel College, Cambridge, which, in the preceding year had been founded by Sir Walter Mildmay,[2] Elizabeth's Chancellor of the Exchequer, a college which was to become the Mother of the eminent University of Harvard. In accordance with the family tradition, Emmanuel Downing was sent to Cambridge, being admitted a scholar at Trinity Hall, on December 16, 1602.[3]

Now Emmanuel, through his wife Lucy Winthrop, was the father of our Sir George Downing, himself the

[1] This will and the will of the earlier George, are given, together with the Downing pedigree, by that devoted genealogist, Mr. J. J. Muskett, in his *Suffolk Manorial Families*, 1900, Vol. I, pp. 96–9.

[2] For the connection between the Mildmay and Winthrop families see p. 21 hereafter. Doubtless the Mildmays and Downings were already acquainted.

[3] I have taken the particulars of the academic careers of Emmanuel Downing and his father from *Alumni Cantabrigienses*, J. and J. A. Venn, published by the Cambridge University Press.

godfather of Downing Street. Emmanuel, therefore, and his wife Lucy must be fully introduced. I make no apology for thus lingering over the immediate ancestors of Sir George. To commemorate "our fathers that begat us" has always seemed to me, not merely a part of piety but a part of wisdom. The roots of a tree are not to be ignored because they are less visible than the branches. The tree must be judged as a whole, by its root, by its branches, and by its flower issuing in fruit and seed.

Lucy Winthrop, the second wife of Emmanuel Downing and the mother of Sir George, came of a family whose history reveals in a shaft of light some of the best qualities in the national character of England, and of America. No family and no nation, of course, is armed with a panoply of noble qualities, and beside the perfect type of a particular virtue there stands always the shadow of its perversion.

Nevertheless, if the reader would trace back to their source certain streams of beauty—

> "Waters, rolling from their mountain springs
> With a soft inland murmur,"—

he cannot do better than come with me to the Manor of Groton, in Suffolk, the home of the Winthrops. From a journey there through the labyrinthine years he will bring back some understanding of what was, and is, and for ever will be the best spirit of the Puritan; of the various motives of men who adventured themselves in the foundation of new nations; of that powerful sanity which, however essential and beautiful is not enough in itself, and in excess almost bars the doors of the imagination: this explains, perhaps, why America has not yet given birth to any supreme imaginative genius to stand among the poets of the world.

By the end of the fifteenth century the Winthrops[1] are

[1] My authority for the following account of Groton and the Winthrops is that very charming and scholarly biography by R. C. Winthrop, *Life and Letters of John Winthrop*, Vol. I, 1588–1630; Vol. II, 1630–1649. Published at Boston by Ticknor and Fields, 1864–1867.

found settled in Suffolk. It was not, however, till 1544 that Adam Winthrop, a wealthy clothier, grandfather of Lucy Downing, purchased of King Henry VIII the Manor of Groton which had but lately belonged to the monastery of Bury St. Edmunds. For this estate Adam paid "four hundred and eight pounds eighteen shillings and threepence, of lawful English money." Adam died in 1562, and in due course the estate passed to a younger son, also Adam. This Adam, Lucy Downing's father, was at one time a Barrister of the Temple, an auditor of Trinity and St. John's Colleges, Cambridge, and a Suffolk country gentleman. These worldly qualifications, however, are not the significant part of Adam's life, but his character. He combined with a considerable measure of practical ability, a certain poetic talent and a profound feeling for the things of the spirit.

To his niece Lady Mildmay (his sister Alice had married Sir Thomas Mildmay, himself a nephew of the Founder of Emmanuel College, Cambridge), Adam addressed some charming verses "at ye Byrth of her Sonne Henery" on Christmas Day, 1619. . . .

"For blessed is that daye and to be kept in mynde,
On which our Saviour Jesus Christ was borne to save mankinde.

Growe up therefore in grace, and feare his holie name,
Who in thy mother's secret wombe thy members all did frame;

And gave to thee a soule thy bodie to susteyne,
Which when this life shall ended be, in heaven with him shall reigne.

. . . . . .

And to thy mother deere obedient be and kinde,
Give eare unto her godlie words and print them in thy mynde.

Thy father likewise love and willingly obey,
That thou may'st long possesse those lands which he must leave one daye." [1]

[1] *Life and Letters of John Winthrop*, Vol. I, pp. 29–30.

And preserved on the flyleaf of an almanac of the year 1620 is this short, simple and beautiful poem :

> " Though that ye Sun doth shine most bright
> Yet dooth the Moone rule al the night.
> The Starres also their course doe keepe,
> When men are laide and faste doe sleepe.
> But God alone dooth rule them all,
> And by his woorde they rise and fall." [1]

Adam wrote this verse when he was seventy-two years old for his small grandson John Winthrop, one day to become Governor of Connecticut, following in the footsteps of his father John Winthrop the elder, himself known to history as the first Governor of Massachusetts.

Adam was a frequent attendant at church, and made notes of the texts in his Almanacs. Therein may also be found pleasant entries such as these :

" 1597. The 22 day of Aprill Grymble my great mastiffe was hanged, a gentle dog in the house but eyes oft blind."

" 1601. The 2 of Jan. Mr. Mannocke sent me iii yardes of Satten for a token of this nue yere."

" 1601. On Saturday the viith of August my sister Mildmay, my cosen Thomas her sonne, my cosen Browne and his wife came to my house and departed the xiiith. The ixth day my sister Alib. [aster] and my sister Veysye came to my house where fyve of us that are brethren and systers mette and made mery wch we had not doone in xvi yeres before."

" 1622. May 4. My son rode to London ; *barbam scidi*." [2]

Some beautiful correspondence has also been preserved between Adam Winthrop and his niece Lady Mildmay, already mentioned. She writes to him " ffrom Graces," and from a house with so lovely a name good letters must plainly come. She concludes a letter of the 24th of November, 1621, thus :

[1] *Life and Letters of John Winthrop*, Vol. I, p. 40.
[2] Id., Vol. I, pp. 38–40.

"Thus, good uncle, fearinge my scribblinge lynes will be troublesome in the readinge, wth my best affection I commit you to God: Desiring him to continue his aboundant grace unto you; that you may bee as the light that shyneth more unto the perfitt daie: To whose protection I commit o^r^ soules: & rest ever, yor lovinge thoughe unwoorthie neece,

"AMY MILDMAY."[1]

The old man, who was specially devoted to this niece, was delighted with these "sweet lettres cominge from the aboundance of yor Love." If it were not for the hand of Time her reverence for him would revive his conceit. Then he proceeds in words singularly noble, seeming as one reads them to become audible, like the solemn sounding of a bell:

"Beinge nowe warned by age to expecte my change daylie, I seeke the more to withdrawe my thoughts from other things, that I maie more seriouslie intende my preparations for it; as the most needeful studie for all; especially for mee, whose time of dissolution is even at hande. Yet so longe as life and light upholde this hearte, I shall not cease to be myndefull of yor Love; and (as my last and best meanes of requitall) laboure to laye up wth the Lorde some pore blessinge of praier, wch may be remembred upon you and yours, for yor best wellfare, when I shall sleep with my fathers."[2]

And within two years, in the spring of 1623, Adam slept with his fathers in the country churchyard of Groton. "He hath finished his course; and is gathered to his people in peace, as the ripe corn into the barn." So, in the early summer of that year, wrote his son John Winthrop to his own son John, for whom Adam had written that pleasant poem of the sun, the moon and the stars.

"He thought long for the day of his dissolution," continues John Winthrop, "and welcomed it most gladly. Thus is he gone before; and we must go after, in our time. This advantage he hath of us,—he shall not see the evil which we may meet with ere we go hence.

[1] *Life and Letters of John Winthrop*, Vol. I, pp. 45–6.
[2] Id., Vol. I, pp. 46–7.

Happy those who stand in good terms with God and their own conscience : they shall not fear evil tidings ; and in all changes they shall be the same." [1]

From these solemn words of the elder John Winthrop, destined seven years later to leave his native land and the peace of Groton to become Governor of Massachusetts —to his son, the future Governor of Connecticut, there comes through the abysm of time the deep echo of that which was best in Puritanism : its intense preoccupation with the things of the spirit, and its profound faith, calm, and transparent as some lake high up among the hills.

Upon April 10, 1622, a year before the death of Adam Winthrop, his daughter Lucy, then twenty-one years of age, was married in Groton Church to Emmanuel Downing, of the Inner Temple. It will be remembered that Emmanuel had been admitted a scholar at Trinity Hall, Cambridge in 1602. Subsequently he had married Anne, daughter of Sir James Ware of Dublin, and after her death—in what year is uncertain, but there were already three children of the marriage—he married Lucy Winthrop as his second wife, thus re-connecting himself with his ancestral county of Suffolk.

The early years of Lucy's and Emmanuel's married life were spent in Dublin, and there in the summer of 1623 was born the redoubtable George Downing. But Dublin did not see much of the infant George, for in 1626 his father and mother are back in England, where they lived " at the House of Mr. Downing, at the Sign of the Bishop, over against the Conduit, in Fleet Street, London." Emmanuel Downing was already an influential lawyer ; he was an Attorney of the Court of Wards, and was instrumental in getting his brother-in-law, John Winthrop, a similar post early in 1627. This is clear from a letter written by the younger John Winthrop to his father from London on January 14, 1626-27. In this letter he urges his father to come at once to London, in order to meet the

[1] *Life and Letters of John Winthrop*, Vol. I, pp. 179–80.

master of the Court before anyone else can be put forward by powerful persons : " my uncle . . . will use all the meanes he can to obteyne it for you . . ." In a postscript the younger Winthrop adds :

" Since the writing of my letter my uncle Downing himselfe hath written. We are all well save little George who hath hadd one sore fitt of an ague." [1]

Thus Emmanuel Downing and John Winthrop were united not only in their brotherhood through marriage, but also in their professional labours. And when they were not actually together letters passed to and fro, those of Lucy and her brother filled with earnest spiritual exhortations after the Puritan manner, those of Emmanuel more practical. But whereas Lucy's letters in this point show a certain effort, as though she were conforming more to a fashion than a faith, her brother's clearly reveal a personality to whom religious speculations were of paramount importance.

And here it is needful to emphasize a remarkable paradox of Puritanism.

Though the best Puritans were continually preoccupied with the spiritual life, they were by no means ascetic. They accepted as providential two great natural institutions, the institution of marriage and the institution of property.[2] The religious vows of Chastity and Poverty which were immemorially associated with the Catholic Faith, they rejected with the rest of that faith, both for themselves and their ministers.[3] These vows had been

[1] *Life and Letters of John Winthrop*, Vol. I, pp. 214–15.

[2] The Puritan theory of the origin of property is clearly set forth, with references to Old Testament precedent (the action of Ephron the Hittite, of Abraham, of Jacob, of Abimilecke's Servants, etc.) in : " Reasons to be considered for justifieinge the undertakers of the intended Plantation in New England, and for incouraginge such whose hartes God shall move to joyne wth them in it," with objections answered. See pp. 311–12, *Life and Letters of John Winthrop*, Vol. I.

[3] According to mediæval orthodox theory virginity was, for all, a nobler state than marriage. See G. G. Coulton, *Five Centuries of Religion*, App. 2, pp. 443–5.

honoured in the Middle Ages often more in the breach than the observance, and finally Rome, not without reason, had become confounded in the minds of many plain men, with the Whore of Babylon. The Puritan, therefore, would accept the world—with a difference. The earthly labourer was worthy of his hire ; the acquisition of wealth was in every way honourable. Women were intended from the days of Genesis to be the help-meets of men, and to be taken in marriage. All this was plain enough. So plain that a man like John Winthrop the elder rejoiced in the thought of his solid possessions in and around Groton, and had not scrupled to lead to the altar a third wife by the time he was forty. Before he died he had married a fourth.

Marriage and property then, were acceptable as providential ordinances solid, ancestral and fundamental in the Puritan pilgrimage. Nevertheless, life was a pilgrimage, and the path narrow and difficult. Therefore diversions were dangerous and to be shunned by sober men. Hence John Winthrop,

"findinge by muche examination that ordinary shootinge in a gunne, etc : could not stande wth a good conscience in my selfe. . . . Therefore I have resolved and covenanted wth the Lorde to give over alltogither shootinge at the creeke ; and for killinge of birds etc. : either to leave that altogither or els to use it, bothe very seldome and verye secreatly. God, (if he please) can give me fowle by some other meanes, but if he will not, yet, in that it is [his] will who loves me, it is sufficient to uphould my resolution." [1]

Later on after a serious illness, he benefits through :

"deliverance from the bondage whereinto I was fallen by the immoderate use and love of Tobacco, so as I gave it cleane over." [2]

It may be taken for granted that he did not approve of plays, and it is improbable that he ever succumbed, unless

[1] *Life and Letters of John Winthrop*, Vol. I, pp. 69–70.
[2] Id., Vol. I, p. 283.

in early youth, to the temptation of either reading or seeing one of the plays of his great contemporary Shakespeare.[1]

At this point I can almost hear a reader protest : " here is the very quintessence of Puritan hypocrisy ! This godly Man of Property ! This spiritual Blue-Beard ! This type of all Prohibitionists ! " The historian and the biographer must instantly protest against any such exclamation. Biography, however noble or ignoble the life may be, almost inevitably provides abundant opportunities for cynical interpretation. But in nine cases out of ten a cynical interpretation proves, on reflection, to be either superficial or inept, betraying the judgment, and glancing asquint upon the face of truth.

It is impossible to read the *Life and Letters of John Winthrop*—and parenthetically let me say I know of few better biographies—without realizing that hypocrisy was not in his nature, and that throughout his life he followed more faithfully than many good men what Sir Thomas Browne has wonderfully named " the funambulatory path of virtue." As to his four wives let me explain that he married his first wife—who was older than he was—when he was a boy of seventeen, and that at times there appears to have been imperfect sympathy between them ; that his second wife died in a year in giving birth to a child ; that his third marriage was the real romance of his life, and that his fourth wife was but the companion of the last and lonely years. His life and property he freely risked in that great adventure over the ocean which ended in laying one of the chief foundation stones of the new nation, or brotherhood of nations, whose population is now as the sand of the sea, with whom so greatly rests the future of Western Civilization.

It is now necessary to pick up again the biographical thread, to show how intimately the Winthrops and the

[1] For a brilliant exposition of the Puritan attitude to the Drama, see E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage*, Vol. I, ch. viii, " Humanism and Puritanism."

Downings were associated as pioneers of the New England pilgrimage, and in so doing to introduce, in due and proper perspective, the central figure of this book. For if the reader has so far accompanied me sympathetically, he will understand that to me Biography is not merely the history of a life suddenly appearing, living the allotted span, and silently disappearing, but the unwinding of an unbroken thread which emerges from the Past, leads the faithful pilgrim into the Present, and points, like a shimmering gossamer into the mysterious Future.

CHAPTER TWO

THE DOWNINGS AND THE NEW WORLD

Play with your fancies, and in them behold
Upon the hempen tackle ship-boys climbing;
Hear the shrill whistle which doth order give
To sounds confus'd; behold the threaden sails,
Borne with the invisible and creeping wind,
Draw the huge bottoms through the furrow'd sea,
Breasting the lofty surge.

—*King Henry the Fifth*, Act III, Chorus.

WHEN George Downing, many years after the events to be recorded in this chapter, was engaged in that clandestine intrigue through which he secured the favour of Charles II on the eve of the Restoration, he excused his previous allegiance to Cromwell on the ground that he had been brought up in New England, "and had sucked in principles that, since, his reason had made him see were erroneous." It is hardly possible to take the last part of this apologia seriously, but it is true in one statement of fact, that he was brought up in New England: at least he was brought up there between his fifteenth and twenty-second year.

Now it is almost certain that the Downings would never have left Old England for New England when they did —in 1638—had it not been for an event which had taken place nine years earlier, in 1629–30. That event was the great enterprise which was undertaken by John Winthrop, Lucy Downing's brother, when he uprooted himself from Groton in Suffolk, and voyaged for seventy days over the ocean to Salem in Massachusetts.

The previous chapter has already shown how intertwined were Winthrop and Downing threads; if the present chapter further emphasizes the fact it is not merely for the sake of repetition, but because that intertwining is of fundamental and inevitable significance.

The "due course of things," in these years "which cannot in their huge and proper light be here presented," must, nevertheless, be shown in briefest outline, for the Winthrop emigration is an historical event of far-reaching importance, not only in the family history of the Downings, but in the history of the world. The United States of America would never have developed in its present form, either materially or spiritually, if the Colony of Massachusetts had not received the peculiar political baptism of 1629–30.[1]

On the 6th of March, 1629, Emmanuel Downing wrote from London to his brother-in-law, John Winthrop, at Groton, describing the famous scene in the House of Commons on the 2nd of March. How the King's Messenger knocked at the door with the message of dissolution, how the weeping Speaker was held down in the Chair, "up riseth Hollace one of the lord of Clare's sonns, and declares to the howse the somme and heads of ye Demonstrance."[2] He means the Protestation of the House of Commons of which the text ran:

1. "Whosoever shall bring in innovation in religion, or by favour

[1] Speaking of the New England states—of which Massachusetts was the most important—De Tocqueville says: "Les principes de la Nouvelle-Angleterre se sont d'abord répandus dans les États voisins; ils ont ensuite gagné de proche en proche les plus éloignés, et ont fini, si je puis m'exprimer ainsi, par pénétrer la Confédération entière. Ils exercent maintenant leur influence au delà de ses limites sur tout le monde américain. La civilisation de la Nouvelle-Angleterre a été comme ces feux allumés sur les hauteurs qui, après avoir répandu la chaleur autour d'eux, teignent encore de leurs clartés les derniers confins de l'horizon."—De Tocqueville, *De La Démocratie en Amérique*, Tom. I, 48, 5th ed., 1868.

[2] The letters quoted in this chapter from Emmanuel Downing are quoted from the *Massachusetts Historical Society's Collections*, Series IV, Vol. VI, pp. 33–90.

or countenance seem to extend or introduce Popery or Arminianism, or other opinion disagreeing from the true and orthodox Church, shall be reputed a capital enemy to this Kingdom and Commonwealth.

2. "Whosoever shall counsel or advise the taking and levying of the subsidies of Tonnage and Poundage, not being granted by Parliament, or shall be an actor or instrument therein, shall be likewise reputed an innovator in the Government, and a capital enemy to the Kingdom and Commonwealth.

3. "If any merchant or other person whatsoever shall voluntarily yield, or pay the said subsidies of Tonnage and Poundage, not being granted by Parliament, he shall likewise be reputed a betrayer of the liberties of England, and an enemy to the same." [1]

The political situation in England in 1629 is summarized in these resolutions, and the dissolution of Parliament by Charles I which instantly followed their reading represented for John Winthrop an event of decisive importance. On May 15 he is in London and writes to his wife:

"... My dear wife, I am veryly persuaded, God will bringe some heavye Affliction upon this lande, and that speedylye: but be of good comfort ... If the Lord seeth it wilbe good for us, he will provide a shelter and abiding place for us and others, as a Zoar for Lott, Sarephtah for his prophet ..." [2]

And in another letter to his wife of June 22, written after the loss of his office as an Attorney in the Court of Wards (why he lost this office is not known, but it was probably on account of his general attitude to the government) he says:

"But where we shall spende the rest of o^r^ short tyme I know not ... my comfort is that thou Art willinge to be my companion in what place or conditio soevere, in weale or in woe. Be it what it may, if God be wth us, we need not feare, his favour, and the King-

[1] *Constitutional Documents of the Puritan Revolution*, 1625–1660, selected and edited by S. R. Gardiner, pp. 82–3, 3rd. ed. revised, 1906.

[2] R. C. Winthrop's *Life and Letters of John Winthrop*, Vol. I, p. 296.

dome of heaven will be alike a happinesse enough to us and o^rs in all places."

It is clear from these letters that John Winthrop was contemplating a radical change of life, and through the crisis he received the active support and counsel of Emmanuel Downing. On July 28 he and "Bro: Downing" rode into Lincolnshire and despite a serious accident—"my horse fell under me in a bogge in the fennes, so I was allmost to the waiste in water; but the Lorde preserved me from farther danger"[1]—they accomplished the end of their journey, apparently a meeting at Lord Lincoln's house. It was in honour of Lady Arabella, Lord Lincoln's daughter, that the ship in which Winthrop set sail early next year, was named.

On August 26 John Winthrop with eight other men of substance signed an "Agreement" at Cambridge in which they undertook to emigrate to New England with their families "Provided always, that . . . the whole Government, together with the patent for the said Plantation, be first, by an order of Court, legally transferred and established to remain with us and others who shall inhabit upon the said plantation."[2]

This agreement with its proviso of Self-Government is the foundation stone of the Massachusetts constitution, for the New England settlements had hitherto been directed from London.

On October 20 John Winthrop was elected the first Governor under the new regime postulated in the Agreement for the Company of the Massachusetts Bay in New England. On the same day he wrote to his wife: "the onely thinge that I have comforte of in it is, that heerby I have assurance that my charge is of the Lorde and that he hath called me to this worke."[3]

Preparations for departure went on apace. John Win-

[1] *Life and Letters of John Winthrop*, Vol. I, p. 304.
[2] Id., Vol. I, pp. 344–5.
[3] Id., Vol. I, p. 340.

throp had to be much in London coping with a multitude of business matters. Every now and again he rode down to Groton, and all the time of his absence he wrote constantly to his beloved wife. As the time for separation drew near—his wife was with child and could not accompany him on the voyage till she was delivered—the letters that passed between London and Groton show that the emotion became almost unbearable.

On January 31, 1630, John Winthrop writes :

"I must now begin to prepare thee for our long parting, which grows very near . . . If now Christ be thy Husband, thou must show what sure and sweet intercourse is between him and thy soul, when it shall be no hard thing for thee to part with an earthly, mortal, infirm husband for his sake . . . The best course is to turn all our reasons and discourse into prayers ; for he only can help, who is Lord of sea and land, and hath sole power of life and death. It is now near eleven of the clock, and I shall write again ere long (if God will) . . ." [1]

Again on February 5 :

"Beinge now ready to send away my Letters, I received thine, the readinge of it *has dissolved* my head into tears. I can write no more. If I live I *will see thee* ere I goe. I shall parte from thee with sorrowe enough ; be comfortable my most sweet wife, o^r^ God wilbe wth thee. Farewell."

John Winthrop's biographer explains that the words in italics are almost illegible in the original manuscript, the paper apparently being wet with tears.

On March 10 he writes from London to "Mine Owne, Mine Onely, My Best Beloved" to say that that morning they are riding down to Southampton where already two of his sons—mere children still—and James Downing, Emmanuel's son by his first wife, were waiting for him :

"My deare wife, be of good courage, it shall goe well with thee and

[1] *Life and Letters of John Winthrop*, Vol. I, pp. 370–1.

us, the hairs of thy head are numbred, he who gave his onely beloved to dye for thee, will give his Angells charge over thee . . ." He adds : " I am exceedingly beholdinge to my good brother and sister D, I can fasten no recompence upon them for all the chardge my selfe and my company have putt them to." [1]

On March 22 he embarked on board the *Arbella* at Southampton. Ten other ships carrying some 700 passengers, 240 cows, and about sixty horses, were to have accompanied the *Arbella*, but several of these ships were late in starting and only three actually left with the *Arbella*, the others following a little later. For a whole fortnight, however, the fleet of four was detained off the Isle of Wight by bad weather, and John Winthrop was enabled to send two last letters to his wife. From the *Arbella* " riding at the Cowes " on March 28 he writes :

" . . . I hope the course we have agreed upon will be some ease to us both. Mondays and Fridays, at five of the clock at night, we shall meet in spirit till we meet in person . . ." ; on April 3 : . . . " Oh, how loath am I to bid thee farewell ! but, since it must be, farewell, my sweet love, farewell . . ." [2]

At length upon the seventieth day of the voyage—which had its share of storms—the *Arbella* sighted land and upon the seventy-sixth day hove to. " In the mean time," entered John Winthrop, upon the 12th June (O.S.) in that *Journal* which has since become the most important original authority of New England early history, " most of our people went on shore upon the land of Cape Ann, which lay very near us, and gathered store of fine strawberries."[3]

Nevertheless, the strawberries must not mislead the imagination into picturing a New England paradise. On the contrary, the Winthrop expedition found the preceding small settlements terribly dwindled through disease,[4] while

[1] *Life and Letters of John Winthrop*, Vol. I, pp. 383–4.
[2] Id., Vol. I, pp. 389–91.
[3] Id., Vol. II, p. 22.
[4] Even the Plymouth settlement (1620) of the Pilgrim Fathers farther south numbered at this time some 300 souls only.

in the neighbouring forests lurked the ever-haunting danger of Indians and wolves. How the new Governor instantly coped with the situation, how he set to work with his own hands in manual labour, how through his example in short time "they had all housed themselves and planted Corne sufficient for theire subsistence," all this is part of American History, and of the marvellous romance of truth.

Meanwhile it is necessary to return to Old England, and follow the fortunes of the Downings in the letters of Lucy and Emmanuel. These letters have fortunately survived in considerable numbers, and between fifty to sixty years ago were published through the invaluable and devoted labours of the Massachusetts Historical Society—a Society which has done for New England History what the Historical Manuscripts Commission has done for the History of the old.[1]

In a letter dated October 8, 1630, from Emmanuel to the "Governour of the Plantacion, in Massachusetts, New England," after referring to the sale of the Groton estate—in which business Emmanuel assisted John Winthrop the younger, and which was effected for the sum of £4,200,[2] Emmanuel says: "I shall desire to hasten over soe soone as the Lord shall open me the way, which I hope will be ere long." Meanwhile he tentatively suggests a settlement farther south for the sake of warmth and "fruitfuller" harvests. On April 30, 1631, he is glad to hear that Winthrop has come through the winter with few deaths, as it had been generally feared the colony might not survive. He hopes to sail himself next spring "ubi animus ibi homo."[3]

But Lucy Downing was too prudently minded to risk the early hardships of the infant settlement with her young

[1] The letters of Lucy Downing, quoted hereafter, are taken from the Massachusetts Historical Society's Fifth Series, Vol. I, and Emmanuel's from the Fourth Series, Vol. VI.

[2] *Life and Letters of John Winthrop*, Vol. II, pp. 77–8.

[3] *Mass. Hist. Soc. Colls.*, Series IV, Vol. VI, p. 39.

children, and Emmanuel was restrained for some years yet. Meanwhile he has to content himself with an investment of some cattle in the colony which Mr. Dillingham keeps "for the third of the increase." In this same letter (November 21, 1632) he refers to his son James: "I am sorrye to see that he writes a worse hand, and more nonsense, in his letters, then in the letters I received a yeare since." He suggests to his correspondent—the younger Winthrop who had now gone over with his stepmother Margaret Winthrop—that James should take to husbandry or trade as he seems to be quite unsuitable for learning. Possibly "my brother Winthrop" could employ him "as his servant." He ends the letter with this charming request, which by its mere expression rolls away three centuries in a moment, and reveals Emmanuel Downing in flesh and blood: "You have a little bird in your contrie that makes a humminge noyse, a little bigger than a bee, I pray send me one of them over, perfect in his feathers in a little box."[1]

A year later Emmanuel was rendering signal service to the new colony in countering, through the powerful instrumentality of Sir John Coke, Secretary of State, a petition to the Privy Council moved by various enemies to the colony (among them Sir Ferdinand Gorges) apparently charging the colony with disloyalty to the Church and State of Old England. Governor John Winthrop specially refers in his *Journal*[2] to this crisis, the complications of which are admirably explained in a letter by Emmanuel Downing to Sir John Coke, which is to be found among the Melbourne Manuscripts as published by the Historical Manuscripts Commission.[3]

1633, December 12. Nelms. Emanuel Downing [To Sir John Coke]. [No address.]

[1] *Mass. Hist. Soc. Colls.*, Series IV, Vol. VI, pp. 40*a*–40*e*.

[2] Winthrop's *Journal—History of New England*, 1630–1649, edited by James Kendall Hosmer, LL.D., 2 vols., 1908; see Vol. I, p. 99.

[3] Vol II, pp. 38–9; for full text see *Mass. Hist. Soc. Procs.* 1892, 1894 Vol. VIII, 383–5.

Sir Ferdinand Gough [Gorges] with some others his co-partners have these many years past laboured to make a plantation in New England, where having spent their money and travail in vain, being ashamed of their own and envying their neighbours' prosperity, have of late made claim to the very ground where Mr. Winthrop, with a colony, hath built and planted, labouring either to overthrow their patent of corporation, or to have other government established. . . . This plantation and that of Virginia went not forth upon the same reasons nor for the same end. Those of Virginia went only for profit. These went upon two other designs; some to satisfy their own curiosity in point of conscience, others (which was more general) to transport the Gospel to those heathen that never heard thereof. . . . The only considerable objection against this plantation is that in time they will revolt from their allegiance and join in trade with strangers. Ans. I. The whole trade of the plantation is maintained by such undertakers as remain in Old England. 2. Those that govern the whole plantation have both lands and children here. 3. Divers others are in reversion and so in hope of lands here for themselves or their children. 4. The undertakers here will persuade the planters to accept a new patent and thereby be bound to transport no masts &c. for cordage and shipping but into Old England. One thing will be humbly desired from His Majesty in this patent —aid against all foreign enemies and that the patent be enlarged a little to the North where the best firs and timber [is]. . . . Its a causeless fear without precedent that a colony planted in a strange land were ever so foolishly besotted as to reject the protection of their natural prince. Exampled from Romans, Dutch, and Portuguese colonists. Shall any suspect that in this colony that never since the creation happened in any? . . . Surely they would be counted a foolish and mad people that should, without constraint, take their stocks out of their friends and kinsmen's hands to venture and hazard the same in men's hands in whom they have had no experience. . . . Let this corporation but enjoy the liberty of their patent, and to choose their own officers, as every corporation doth here, then shall this kingdom clearly gain by the fruits of their labours that commodious trade of cordage pitch and tar . . . Since my return from Nelms I understand of ill news from New England, that the Dutch have intruded upon the principal and best river in New England, which runneth along the back of this plantation.

In the same year (1633) Emmanuel rendered the colony

another very practical, though relatively minor service. In his *Journal* under date October 11, 1633, Governor John Winthrop, enters. . . . "The wolves continued to do much hurt among our cattle ; and this month, by Mr. Grant, there came over four Irish grey-hounds, which were sent to the Governor by Mr. Downing his brother-in-law."

Still the Downings hesitated to embark on that perilous ten weeks' voyage, and to face the arduous exertions of pioneer life in the new plantation, even though it was now firmly and prosperously planted. Lucy was responsible for delaying. Emmanuel explains to his nephew, the younger John Winthrop, on March 1, 1635–6 : "She feareth much hardshipp there, and that wee shall spend all, ere wee be setled in a course to subsist even for foode and rayment." He urges his nephew to encourage his aunt to come over.[1]

In an immensely long letter written sometime in 1636 to her brother the Governor, Lucy Downing reveals her mind on the matter with the utmost clarity : she was evidently a woman of powerful personality and great shrewdness—which latter quality she transmitted to her son George in somewhat excessive measure. Her letter begins by explaining that they were then "banisht the city," presumably on account of the plague. "We have divided ourselves, and George and Joshua are at Maydstone in Kent, at schoole, the master havinge taken a hows there, and the other 3 are at my brother Gostlins where wee nowe are." Her brother had evidently been urging New England upon her, so she observes "for ould Enlan and London, whoe that knowes them can deny the desireableness of them, as they are in them selves : and for my owne part, changes where ever irksome to me and the sea much more." Moreover, things religiously were better—from the Puritan standpoint—even though "the doctrin of sanctification" is not pressed as much as it might be. Still this may only be the calm before the storm, in which case emigration may be necessary—so I read her tortuous sentences, laden with theological references. On the other

[1] *Mass. Hist. Soc. Colls.*, Series IV, Vol. VI, pp. 43–4.

hand, many well-informed people "doe much fear the country [New England] cannot afford subsistence for many people, and that if you wear not supplied of incomes from hence your lives would be verv misserable . . . from exstremities good Lord deliver me : for I have litell confidence of my self in such cases ; but if wee see God withdrawinge his ordinances from us hear, and inlarginge His presence to you thear, I should then hope for comfort in the hazards of the sea with our litell ones shrikinge about us ; and that Daniell's pulls should be better to us with a Christ then all worlds of pleasures without Him ; and in such a case I should willinglie rather venter my chilldrins bodyes, and my owne for them, then there soulses : but otherwise I cannot see but it weer an effect of diffidence rather then of fayth, to leap callings, estates, conveniences and all till wee are forced from them by some compulsion "[1]

Governor John Winthrop seems to have replied to this letter by sending his sister some "dayntie fruits wich indeed wear as good as ould Eng. it selfe affords, in their kinde." So Lucy describes them in a letter written on March 4, 1636–1637. The religious prospect was then darkening : "thes are dayes of tryall. Pray that our fayth fayle not nowe : I confess could a wish transport me to you, I think, as big as I am, I should rather wish to bring an Indyan than a coknye into the world." Even so, she cannot see that God had yet freed them for the journey, though she sees "more proballitie of the concurrence of things that waye nowe then formerlie I ever did both for generalls and perticullers, if God pleas to speare our lives."[2] Then follows a passage showing the extraordinary sense of the Downings—their ardent faith in education. I have already pointed out this remarkable family characteristic, shown by Emmanuel's grandfather, by his father, and by himself. Whether Lucy's belief was native or due to her husband's influence is not clear, but it is noteworthy that at the very same time that she was writing to her brother

[1] *Mass. Hist, Soc. Colls.*, Series V, Vol. I, pp. 14–17.
[2] Id., Series V, Vol. I, pp. 18–20.

urging the foundation of a College in the colony, he was pressing the same point with the younger Winthrop. He suggests that a College will gather of itself if a few able men read lectures. They might begin by one Minister reading once a week for a month in every quarter, "a logick, greke or hebrew lecture or the like."[1]

Lucy's letter is more interesting because she shows her immediate concern for her son George. "George and his father complye moste cordyally for New Eng.: but poor boy, I fear the journie would not be so prosperous for him as I could wish, in respect you have yet noe sosieties nor means in that kinde for the education of youths in learninge: and I bless God for it, he is yet reasonable hopefull in that waye; and it would I thinke as wee saye greve me in my grave to knoe that his mynde should be withdrawne from his booke by other sports or imployments, for that weer but the waye to make him good att nothinge. Its true the colledges hear are much corrupted, yet not so I hope, but good frinds maye yet finde a fittinge tutor for him: and if maye be with any hopes of his well doeinge hear. Knowinge your prevalency with my husband, and the hazard the boy is in by reason both of his father, and his owne strong inclination to the plantation sports, I am bould to present this sollissitous suit of myne, with all earnestnes to you and my nephew Winthrop, that you will not condecend to his goeinge over till he hath either attayned to perfection in the arts hear, or that theer be sufficient means for to perfet him theerin with you, wich I should be moste glad to hear of: it would make me goe far nimbler to New Eng. if God should call me to it, then otherwise I should; and I beleev a college would put no small life into the plantation. . . ."

Although the Downings were, at the date of these letters, apparently unaware of it, the general court of the Colony had already voted in the autumn of 1636 in favour of a College. Later it was agreed that the College should be at Cambridge. But this proposal seems to have progressed

[1] *Mass. Hist. Soc. Colls.*, Series IV, Vol. VI, p. 47.

slowly till the needed finance was provided through the noble benefaction of John Harvard, sometime of Emmanuel College in the old Cambridge, who, dying at Charlestown in September, 1638, left half his estate and all his library to the projected College. The College was now immediately begun, and in March of the following year (1639) was christened Harvard College in memory of its chief founder.[1]

On September 21, 1637, Emmanuel Downing wrote to his brother-in-law, Governor Winthrop, saying definitely : " I purpose God willinge to sett forth hence in the beginning of Aprill at furthest." [2] In the same letter he refers to the disturbances in Scotland, how the Scots had thrown out the Book of Common Prayer. Whether Emmanuel was depressed at the darkening political horizon in England and thought it expedient to emigrate before the gathering storm burst, or whether the establishment of educational facilities in Massachusetts removed Lucy Downing's anxiety on account of her son George's studies, whatever the reason prompting a move long contemplated, certain it is that in the autumn of 1638 the Downings are found settled at Salem. The colony was now firmly established : in 1643 it was calculated that its white population numbered 15,000,[3] and in 1638 it probably numbered between 10,000 and 12,000 persons. Nevertheless, it was only by hard work that the colonists prospered, and an " idle rich " or an idle poor section of the community simply did not exist. Nor was the colony free from external and internal troubles. In the year preceding the Downings' arrival an arduous and victorious campaign had been waged against the Pequot Indians,[4] while in the same year

[1] *Mass. Hist. Soc. Colls.*, Series V, Vol. I, pp. xxxvi.-vii.; also *D.N.B.* under " John Harvard."

[2] Id., Series IV, Vol. VI, p. 48.

[3] *England under the Stuarts*, G. M. Trevelyan, App. A, pp. 521–2.

[4] An exceedingly interesting, not to say exciting, account of a battle with the Indians will be found in Richard Davenport's letter, July, 1637, *Mass. Hist. Soc. Colls.*, Series V, Vol. I, pp. 244–8.

the Antinomian heresy had been stamped out only after bitter theological recrimination and by a rigid adherence to the policy of the age, maintained by Puritan as vigorously as by Churchman or Presbyterian—stark intolerance. In this connection it is interesting to note that the Downings were members at Salem of the church of which that most unlovable of Puritan divines was minister, the Reverend Hugh Peter, who, returning later to England, preached the notorious sermon so full of sound and fury on the eve of the execution of Charles I.[1] Perhaps after all there was some excuse for the youthful George if he "sucked in" uncompromising notions and erroneous principles as a youthful member of Peter's flock.

Meanwhile the excellent habit of letter-writing, in which the Winthrops and Downings excelled, was fortunately not discontinued, for Governor Winthrop and his family lived at Boston, while the Downings were at Salem, and constant notes passed between them. Emmanuel was very solicitous for the Governor's health: "cold and wett espetially of your feet are two great traytors to your health, and must be watched verie narrowly, verie narrowly" he writes on March 2, 1638–9.[2] In the spring of the same year the Governor tried to get Emmanuel elected as an "Assistant" (i.e. one of the colony's magistrates), but "though he were known to be a very able man, etc, and one who has done very good offices for the country, for these ten years, yet the people would not choose him," being jealous that the government of the colony would become too much a Winthrop family concern.[3]

Meanwhile Lucy intersperses practical notes with varied references, now of "much business of hay and harvest," now of gleeful gossip that has just come over, of Archbishop Laud being "fast in the Tower; and if our St. Peter keeps the keyes, his grace is like to coole his shins,

[1] See the Author's *Gossip of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, pp. 24–6. Also footnote, p. 23, *Mass. Hist. Soc. Colls.*, Series V, Vol. I.

[2] *Mass. Hist. Soc. Colls.*, Series IV, Vol. VI, p. 51.

[3] Winthrop's *Journal*, 1630–49, Vol. I, p. 302.

ere he gets in, this could weather" ; now of borrowing a gander from her sister-in-law : " I have 3 gooses and not a husban for them, wich lost me at least 40 egs last year and very generall is the loss."[1]

It is not till 1642 that George Downing begins to figure in New England History. In that year he was one of nine bachelors of arts, " young men of good hope," as Governor Winthrop described them who " commenced " at Harvard College. On December 27, 1643, he was appointed on a salary of £4 " to read to the Junior pupills."[2] But the times were anxious, and his mother worried about his future. The outbreak of the Civil War in England caused an economic crisis in Massachusetts : trade languished, there was much distress, specially in 1642, and certain of the colonists for various motives even left the colony. Lucy wrote to her brother, the Governor, on February 24, 1642–3: " Somewhat allso I am troubled concerning my sonne Georg. I perceive he is strongly inclined to travill. Eng. is I fear unpeaceable, and other countryes perilous in point of religion and maners. Besides we have not wearwith to accommodate him for such an ocasion : and to goe a servant I think might not be very fit for him neither, in divers respects. Religious masters or fellowes are not frequent in travills, nor is he any scribe. I pray, sir, be pleased to consider of it, and to give him your best advise, for I fear it maye be some present prejudice to him hear : and the liklyest I can perceive to be his motive is his little expectation and fears of supplye hear. The good Lord direct him to His owne glory."[3]

Lucy Downing need not have been anxious for her son ; he had inherited the abilities of both his parents in full measure, and was also possessed of a vaulting ambition, which, however, never o'erleapt itself. Harvard College was too quiet for George, and £4 a year was not wealth.

[1] *Mass. Hist. Soc. Colls.*, Series V, Vol. I, pp. 27, 31, 32.

[2] *Biographical Sketches of Graduates of Harvard University*, by J. L. Sibley, M.A., Vol. I, 1642–1658, p. 30.

[3] *Mass. Hist. Soc. Colls.*, Series V, Vol. I, pp. 34–5.

He determined to travel, and in 1645 he embarked on a ship bound for the West Indies, as instructor—apparently in matters spiritual—of the seamen.[1]

It was on this voyage that George Downing wrote the first letter of which we have knowledge. From this letter the reader will glean many things : he will at once see that the subject of this biography at the age of twenty-two was an exceedingly able young man. Moreover, he will learn much of men, manners, and countries in 1645.

To his honoured Cosen John Winthrop [Junior], Esquire, these. New England.

Sir,—It is to my no small griefe to hear of God's afflicting hand both at home and abroad, but yet (I must needs confesse) 'tis no more than I partly lookt for before my departure, when as I considered the instability of all men's minds, the depressing of such as well diserved, a sad omen that God will either taken them wholly away, because they are not esteemed of them, or make them such as the fickle guidy headed people would have them to be. We are growne a little to hygh . . .

I hope you have received my letter by Mr. Young, whearin as neer as I am able, I have sett down the state of the Indyes. We were there from the 12th of Feb. to the 17th of July, in which tim I endeavoured, as far as I was able, to understand the state of things in all kinds. I was twice at the Barbadoes, thrice at Antegua, and many times at Nevis, but most at Christopher, last at Santa Cruce. If you go to Christopher, you shal see the ruins of a flourishing place. The reasons I might sett down, but it would be too tedious. If you go to Barbadoes, you shall see a flourishing Iland, many able men. I believe they have bought this year no less than a thousand Negroes, and the more they buie, the better able they are to buye, for in a yeare and half they will earne (with God's blessing) as much as they cost. If you go to Antegua, you shall meet with a very understanding, courteous gentleman, Captain Ashton, governor of the Iland, with whom I am intimate, his love towards me was singular, and I knowe he will be wondrous glade to see you, and to give you any encouragement the Iland affoards. If you go to Nevis, you shal meet with a discreet man, Governour Lake, who likewise was importunate

[1] Governor Winthrop's *Journal—History of New England*, Vol. II, 242–3.

with me to stay there, and indeed, had I conjectured of your coming, I should have stayed either ther or at Antegua.

We came from Christophers in company with an old Flemmish vessell which belonged to the Iland : we sett sayle about midnight : early in the morning she sprange a butt end of a planke in her runne, so they were fourst to runne her ashoare upon Saba. So we took in som of their company, with their Merchant, and carried them down to Santa Cruce, where two English vessels were riding which had then brought Major Reynoulds thither, to be Governour.

This is a brave Iland, as bigge as the Barbados, as healthy as any Iland in the Indyes. [He then proceeds to relate how the Island was inhabited by English, Dutch and French, but that the English finding the French and Dutch interfered with their trade attacked and beat them "and so they have now the whole Iland in possession and have received a Governour."] If this I[lan]d be well settled, it will be of great consideration, espetially because 'tis no neer the Spaniard. If you intend to see the Indyes, it would not be convenient (as I think) to venter much till you have seen it. New England servants (I fear) will be noon of the fittest for those parts.

The certainest commodityes you can carry for those parts (I suppos) will be fish, as mackrill, basse, drye fish, beefe, porke, if you can procure them at reasonable rates, and if you be there in the Spring, it's the best time, because the fewest ships are there. Linnen cloath is a certaine commodity, but that is deare in New England. We sould linnen which cost 10*d.*$\frac{3}{4}$ the Portugal vare (which is within two ynches of an English ell) for 12 l. de tob, or a pound of endico the yard.

A man that will settle ther must looke to procure servants, which if you could gett out of England, for 6, or 8, or 9 yeares time, onely paying their passages, or at the most but som small above, it would do very well, for so therby you shall be able to doe somthing upon a plantation, or in short time be able, with good husbandry, to procure Negroes (the life of this place) out of the encrease of your owne plantation.

I praye God in mercy direct and blesse you, and let your prayers go along with us, and I hope that if you undertake that voyage, I may see you in the Indyes, for we are now bound home, and shall goe neer in our return to touch in the Indyes, and so for New England.

My humble duty to my unkle (whom I thinke unthankfull New England is unworthy of) and my Aunt, my love to my cozen Stephen and his wife, my cosen Adam and his wife, my cosen Sam [torn], my

brother and sister Stoddard, goodman Child and his wife, Mr. Sheepheard, Mr. Pelham and his wife, with all the rest of my good friend[s] to whom (if it be God will) I wish all peace and prosperity, and that God knitt their hearts together, which I fear will hardly be done whil their government remaines so popular. I am perswaded thers not the meanest of those 3 or foure men they so tosse and tumble, but if chosen for life would be able to mannage the affayres of the country far otherwise than now : but with all the limit of freedomship I believe must be sett a little wider.

Thus with my humble unfained love to your selfe, with cosen your wife, my cosen John, my cosen Lucy and Elizabet, I rest your truely obsequious cosen and servant

GEORGE DOWNING.

Newfoundland, aboard the ship in Caplin baye, Aug. 26, 1645.

I heare ther are strang reports concerning us in New England ; and som thinges tis true were amiss in the beginning of the voyage, but they which with such aggravations sett them forth were the greatest causes thereof, and (my life for it) he that shall man a ship with New England milke sopps shall never speed better. Where Authority is bebased, an eare given to every prating fellow, ther shall never reports be wanting—(God be thanked) but we are yett well, and if the Lord continue the same gracious hand towards us, I hope the owners shall have no great cause to complaine.[1]

[1] *Mass. Hist. Soc. Colls.*, Series IV, Vol. VI, pp. 536–40.

CHAPTER THREE

GEORGE DOWNING RETURNS TO ENGLAND : HIS CAREER UNDER CROMWELL TO 1655 : SCOUTMASTER-GENERAL : MARRIAGE

> No part of time but bare his mark away
> Of honour—all the Year was Cromwell's day,
> But this, of all the most auspicious found,
> Thrice had in open field him Victor crowned:
> When up the armèd mountains of Dunbar
> He marched, and through deep Severn, ending war.
> —ANDREW MARVELL.

(Upon the death of his late Highness the Lord Protector: ls. 141–6.)

A YEAR after the date of the letter which George Downing wrote "aboard the ship in Caplin Bay," Newfoundland, he was back in England. Eight years had passed since, accompanied by his parents, he had left his native land, and in those years England had been violently shaken by civil commotion, by revolution, and by battle. The year from June, 1645 to June, 1646, from the battle of Naseby to the capitulation of Oxford, had seen the supremacy of the Parliamentary forces finally established by the military genius of Cromwell. The hammer blows of Marston Moor (1644) and of Naseby had as completely demolished the military prospects of Charles I as later those of Dunbar and Worcester were, for a decade, to destroy the prospects of his son.

To the Puritan settlements in New England, the Parliamentary victories seemed to herald an era full of providential possibilities, and numbers of the settlers or their sons returned to the mother country. Among them was George Downing. Precisely when he set out on the homeward

voyage is not known, but by the summer of 1646 he had arrived.

The following exceedingly ill-spelt letter from Mrs. Lydia Bankes, of Maidstone, Kent, to a New England correspondent dated 28th August, 1646, introduces George in the roll of Puritan Preacher in which he began his successful worldly career :

" Pray," says Mrs. Bankes, " let my Inderred respect be presented to your wife as all so to Mrs. Downind and her hosband desiring them to rejoyce with me for that the lord is ples to make her sone a Instrument of praise In the hartes of tose that regoyce to hear the Sperrit of god poured forth apon our young men according to his word let her know that he prech In our town of maidston a day or to befor this letter was wrot to the great soport of our Sperites." [1]

That George Downing began his career in England as a preacher is vouched for by this letter : that his technical capacity was that of preacher to Colonel Okey's regiment is confirmed by several unimpeachable witnesses, amongst them his uncle, Governor John Winthrop. Governor Winthrop thus describes the beginning of his nephew's career :

" The scarcity of good ministers in England, and want of employment of our new graduates, occasioned some of them to look abroad. Three honest young men, good scholars, and very hopeful, viz . . . and Mr. George Downing, son of Mr. Emanuel Downing of Salem, Batchellor of Arts also, about twenty years of age, went in a ship to the West Indies to instruct the Seamen. He went by Newfoundland, and so to Christophers and Barbadoes, and Nevis, and being requested to preach in all these places, he gave such content, as he had large offers made to stay with them. But he continued in the ship to England, and being a very able scholar, and of a ready wit and fluent utterance, he was soon taken notice of, and called to be a preacher in Sir Thomas Fairfax his army, to Colonel Okye his regiment." [2]

[1] Quoted in J. L. Sibley's *Biographical Sketches of Graduates of Harvard University*, Vol. II, p. 527 (1881).

[2] Governor Winthrop's *Journal—History of New England*, Vol. II, pp. 242–3.

"Preacher to Colonel Okye his regiment"—the phrase, or rather the fact, should be remembered, because, fifteen years later, its importance will become apparent. Meanwhile, and in preliminary mitigation of Downing's conduct in his betrayal of Okey to the scaffold in 1662—an event to be fully considered hereafter—it must at once be stated that nothing is known of the personal relations between Okey and Downing, nor precisely how long Downing remained in Okey's regiment as preacher.

For more than a year and a half from the date of Mrs. Bankes's illuminating letter about the Maidstone sermon to the solemn Puritans of that town in 1646, nothing whatever is known of George Downing's actual doings. When we next hear of him he is attached in some capacity unknown to that stiff-necked Republican Member of Parliament, Sir Arthur Haselrig. Sir Arthur Haselrig had been nominated to the Governorship of Newcastle by Fairfax, and on December 30, 1647, the House of Commons endorsed this appointment.[1] From the following letter it would seem that Haselrig did not go north to Newcastle till some time in March, 1648.

This letter of George Downing's is of great importance for a variety of reasons.[2] I know of no document which sets out with such clarity the political difficulties of the time. Nor is it notable merely for this, but because it epitomizes in very vivid phrases the eternal vices of all revolutions, vices of confusion, such as would seem to outweigh the cleansing virtues which revolutions begin by introducing, and end by corrupting.

To the Worshipfull his very good Unkle John Winthrop the elder, Esquier, these, N.E.

Sir,—

The very argument that hath all this while withheld my penne, doth still presse upon me: only I am affraid, that while I am so long

[1] Sir Charles Firth's notice of Haselrig (Hesilrige) in *D.N.B.*

[2] From the *Massachusetts Historical Society's Collections*, Series IV, Vol. VI, pp. 540–3 (1863).

musing on the hyghnesse of the presumption of writing to yourselfe, just occasion might seeme to be given of a worse construction of my silence : and therefore I have at last adventured, as rather desiring to be accounted any thing, than unmindful of the duty nature hath commanded me to owe you, or unthankefull for the continued tract of favour from yourselfe while I was in New England, and I wish I knewe upon what heads to enlarge myselfe, so as might be most acceptable. For the state of things heer, it hath been very various, not only in the time of the warre, but more since : we having since the sheathing of the swourd some times enjoyed our lucid intervals, but then all hath quickly been o'reclowded, that no mortall eye could in the face of things see any thing but ruine. The maine ground (as to humane causes) hath been the great divisions among us. For while the common enemy was unsubdued, ther was kind of aggreement, all knowing that if he prevayled, all without distinction should be swallowed up in the common fate ; but when he beganne to be very low, then every one bethinkes himselfe, what have I fought for all this while, why have I so deeply engaged myselfe in this unnaturall warre ? Saith one, I fought and engaged for the removing evill counsellours from the king, and the settling his person in his just rights, saith another, I engaged for the establishment of presbitory, and pulling downe Episcopacy ; Saith another, I fought against the King, as conceiving him rather to act than be acted of any evill counsellours whatsoever ; another, he fought against oppression in generall. So if any Church government tend to an oppression and enslaving the consciences of men, so farre, saith he, I fought against it ; as Monarchy may lye open to tyranny, so against it, if there bee any laws that tend to it, or any courts whatsoever, as (saith he) the Lords howse, they being not choosen by the people (the foundation of true authority) but only sitting there in theire owne persons, and therfore (saith he) what reason is there they should have any vote, at least in the legislative favor of the Kingdome ? Hence one cryes out, settle church government, punish errours and blasphemyes, according to the covenant ; another, remember your often declarations for liberty for tender consciences ; one, bring home the King according to the covenant ; another, it can't stand with the preservation of the true religion and liberty, etc., and thus for want of a downright playne understanding of the foundation of this warre, without all equivocation, we have been likely often to have been embroyled in a more bloody, and by our quarrellings to give occasion to any third party to devoure all. To mention particulars would be

voluminous. I dowpt not but you heere of Hollis and that partyes hygh endeavours against the army, and so all whose interest were that way ; of the armyes almost unparrallellable proceeds against them, how neer this had brought us to blood, the Kings being taken from Holmsby by some of the army, and how curriously his party with himselfe had insinuated themselves into them, so that indeed no man knewe what to say or do at present, as I could hint at large in all partyes ; how the King went of his owne accord from Hampton court to the Ile of Wight, of the Parliaments propositions to him, with his answer to them, and the houses unexpected votes thereupon, which with their declaration I have sent you, with two more, one of which I desire my father may have, and the other for Mr. Shepheard. That which is now in acting is, the calling in question of those who were deeplyest engaged, in that fource upon the two howses, and the promoting of a new warre thereupon, and a declaration about the Scots. That which is feared is a warre with Scotland. What the issue will be the Lord only knowes, only he seems to be shaking the great ones of the earth. In Fraunce have lately been practises in this kind. The story of Naples, with their successe, I suppose you have. Pardon my boldnesse thus farr ; with my love and service to all my cosens, my humble service to Mr. Colton and Mr. Wilson,

Sir, I am your dutiful nephew,

G. Downing

Canonbury, Islingt : March 8, 47. [i.e. 48]

Sir Arthur Hazelridg (with whom I live) is appointed Governour of New Castle upon Tyne, (which as to the present state of things, is the most considerable garrison in the Kingdome) and I am suddainely to go with him thither. The Lord graunt peace (if it be his will) between the two Kingdomes, which if so, I suppose we shall returne againe to London ere the end of summer ; however, what letters shall be sent to me, the safest way will be to direct to be left at the three pidgeons in Wallbrooke, London.

Sir, if it shall ever lye in my power in any way to serve N.E. (to which I wishe very well) I hope I shall not be unwilling.

Sir Arthur Haselrig duly maintained Newcastle for the Parliament through the spring and summer of 1648, during which time the second civil war flared up in various parts of the country—Royalist risings of which the secret mainspring lay in the Isle of Wight where Charles was then a prisoner.

All these risings were suppressed by Cromwell and Fairfax, the former conducting the brilliant campaign in the North of England which ended in the rout of Hamilton and the Scots at Preston and elsewhere. In the early autumn, Haselrig accompanied Cromwell to Edinburgh, and it was probably on this occasion that Cromwell first came into close contact with George Downing. For the next definitive news we get of Downing, a year later, in November, 1649, is sufficiently startling. Cromwell, who like all great leaders of men had a hawk-like eye for ability, had made George Downing his Scoutmaster-General.

Originally a sort of skirmisher in chief, the Scoutmaster-General in the reorganized army of the New Model and the Commonwealth was, in effect, the chief of the Intelligence Staff : it was his business to survey and control " le service des espions et des correspondences secrètes."[1] His rank seems to have been equivalent to that of a Major-General, and in several of the documents in the *Calendars of State Papers Domestic* Downing is so described. The salary attached to the post was very considerable—£4 a day—but this included also the salary of the espionage staff under the Scoutmaster-General.

Thus at the age of twenty-six the son of Emmanuel and Lucy Downing had become one of the most important and influential persons in the England of the revolution.[2]

Before recounting George Downing's doings as Scoutmaster-General, it will be well to see how his success affected his family in New England. Clearly Lucy's maternal heart swelled within her. " He [my brother Kirby] sayth his cosen Georg is the only thriveing man

[1] So Downing's post is described by Pontalis (whose authority is Wicquefort) in his life of *Jean de Witt*, I, pp. 246–7. But far the best account of the post will be found in Sir Charles Firth's *Cromwell's Army*, 3rd ed., Methuen, 1921, pp. 63–7.

[2] " One of the causes of the success of Fairfax and Cromwell was the efficiency of their intelligence staff," so says Professor Firth. See his *Cromwell's Army*, named in preceding note. At the reference there given a footnote will be found which dates Downing's appointment from November 1, 1649.

of our generation. Mr. Winsloe tould him he is a purchaser [of lands, see below], but complaynes of his owne sonns sufferance in respect of judgment, being Presbiterian, and for that deprived of livinge and benefit of the lawe for recoveringe their depts, so as he is forced to keep him and his. The good Lord direct according to his owne mynde. Are we not brethren, was a phars [phrase] of ould. I wish it still as tenderly practised, and would hope by marcy it is so." [1]

Thus she wrote to her nephew (" honored cosen " as she was accustomed to call him) John Winthrop the younger, on February 23, 1650 (-1). A cryptic reference in the letter to " the business " appears to refer to some appointment which George was endeavouring to obtain for his father in England. Emmanuel in a letter written on the preceding December 24 refers to it as " my buisness." He adds : " I heare by divers, of his [George's] purchase of 2 or 300 l. per annum [i.e. in land, as is clear from another letter] ; my sonne [in law] Norton saw the last payment at Mr. Winslow's chamber." [2] The " buisness," in fact—or its equivalent—was not accomplished for some four years, but when it did mature George Downing might have congratulated himself on having done very well for his father. A note of the Proceedings of the Council of State on May 4, 1655, runs as follows : " to advise his Highness that nine be the number of the Council in Scotland . . . and Emanuel Downing their clerk." [3]

Nor did George's activities on his family's behalf cease here. In a letter to John Winthrop the younger, dated from Salem " 15 of the first mo. 52 " (i.e. Jan. 15, 1653) Emmanuel writes : " George hath putt Joshua [George's brother] into a Customes place in Scotland." [4]

[1] *Mass. Hist. Socs. Colls.*, Series V, Vol. I, pp. 40–1.

[2] Id., Series IV, Vol. VI, pp. 76–7. See also Series V, Vol. I, pp. 373–4 for further cryptic references to the " buisness." From this letter of Emmanuel's we learn " that George hath purchased 300*l.* per ann^{m} in land, wch putts me in some hope."

[3] *Cal. State Papers Dom.*, 1655, p. 152.

[4] *Mass. Hist. Socs. Colls.*, Series IV, Vol. VI, pp. 79–80.

Hugh Peter—the famous, or rather egregious, Puritan divine, who had returned to England from Massachusetts on a special mission for the colony in 1641, and had not gone back, was also impressed by George's worldly success. He urged John Winthrop the younger—with whom he was connected by marriage—to leave New England, and join in what amounted to the hunt for Royalist spoil : " my counsell is you should come hither with your family for certaynly you will be capable of a comfortable living in this free Commonwealth. I doe seriously advise it : and you shall have more by the next if you bee not come away. G. Downing is worth 500 l. per annum but 4 l. per diem—your brother Stephen worth 2000 l. and a Major. I pray come. I am yours ever, H. PETER." [1]

This letter was written on October 10, 1652. The younger Winthrop, however, was not to be moved to desert that New England of which he and his father had been pioneers and pillars. It was, indeed, fortunate, for eighteen months later, April 10, 1654, Hugh Peter is advising John Winthrop to stay where he is, and complains that Emmanuel Downing, who was still at Salem, owes him money. " Mr. Downing is not honest, owes me £100 for which his howse is bound to mee. These are not good dealings. Mr. Endecot owes me mony, payes none." Emmanuel comes over in the autumn of 1654, and Hugh Peter is still grumbling : he writes to John Winthrop in January 3, 1654—(5) " your Uncle Downing is at your brother's, no preferment yet, nor debts payd."

These domestic details have their historic interest. It was right that George Downing should try and help his family, but the vulture-like croak of Hugh Peter " I pray come " is less pleasing, and it is impossible not to feel poignant sympathy for the Royalist country squires, and Anglican clergy whose property and livings were sequestrated or taken away because they believed in " the old and tried foundation " of Monarchy and Episcopacy. To the eye of posterity bygone revolutions present them-

[1] *Mass. Hist. Socs. Colls.*, Series IV, Vol. VI, p. 114.

selves most often in their extreme aspects whether of nobility or of terror. The humdrum, intermediate side, the indifferent, the sordid or the mean, is apt to be forgotten, or to sink into obscurity. It is thus with all revolutions, and not least with the Puritan Revolution of 1642-60.

Of George Downing's secret activities as Scoutmaster-General no information has survived. The reasons are obvious. In the first place much, if not most, of the work would be the subject not of written but of verbal reports, and in the second place George Downing was doubtless careful to cover up any written tracks when the Restoration took place. Hence among the two manuscript volumes [1] in the British Museum containing George Downing's official papers from 1644–1682, I found none of any interest as to his secret-service activities as Scoutmaster-General.

But though the secret side is concealed from us, it is possible to catch numerous glimpses of the Scoutmaster-General's more public activities.

The best idea of these will be obtained if I indicate what seemed to me the most interesting references in the *Calendars of State Papers Domestic* during this period.[2]

1650. July 24. Proceedings of the Council of State. "Mr. Scott to write to the scout-master, and Mr. Downing to take care that daily notice be given to the Council of what passes in the army, and to speak to Mr. Attorney, that the posts may be ready to carry the letters."

1651. Aug. 10. "The letter read to be sent to the Lord Mayor, with a copy of the letter from scout-master-general Downing to be published at Paul's this afternoon."

I refer hereafter to this letter which describes the progress of the Scottish campaign.

[1] *B.M. Add. MSS.* 22,919 and 22,920.

[2] The page numbers of these references to the *Calendars of State Papers Domestic* are as follows: 1650, p. 251; 1651, p. 312; 1651–2, p. 439; 1652–3, p. 383 and pp. 441–2; 1653–4, pp. 109–10, 194, 236 and 285; 1655, pp. 331–2.

1651–2. Oct. 14 (1651). Committee of Parliament to confer with the Deputies from Scotland. Days's proceedings. "1. Mr. Downing to attend this Committee when they sit . . ."

1652–3. June 4 (1652). A letter from the Council of State to Downing authorising him to obtain gunpowder and round shot for which need is urgent, (owing as is clear from a later entry, to the Naval War with the Dutch which began in May), either by contract, or seizure at a valuation. Power to impress wagons etc., for its carriage. All Mayors and Sheriffs to co-operate.

1653–4. Aug. 27 (1653). A letter to Downing from one Welch at Leith giving intelligence of movements of Dutch merchant fleets; wishes our fleet had notice of it.

In October of the same year 1653, Downing, among others, is ordered to sort the Scotch records in the Tower and report to the Protector. "Mr. Downing and Dr. Staynes" complete this laborious work in November.

On December 5, Scoutmaster-General Downing with other officers are appointed by the Council of State to inquire into certain "discoveries," and examine witnesses.

The entries in 1654 and 1655 are not especially interesting, but on June 9, 1655, we find the indefatigable Scoutmaster-General reporting with Commissioner-General Whalley on a complicated question connected with the pay of Irish soldiers.

In such varied public activities as these was George Downing engaged between the years 1650 and 1655. From the first extract from the *Calendars of State Papers Domestic* it will be noted that the Scoutmaster-General was required to keep the Council of State informed of military matters. I give therefore two illustrations of the admirable way in which Downing fulfilled this instruction.

The first is a letter[1] "to the Honourable Council of State relating the progress of the Parliament's Forces in Scotland; together with the King's marching into England etc., dated Newcastle, Aug. 7, 1651."

After describing the reduction of St. Johnston, the strength and movements of the various Parliamentary

[1] *B.M. Catalogue*, E. 640 (5) and (21).

forces in Scotland, and the calamitous condition of the Royalist forces, he proceeds :

"Truly, the Lord hath done wonderfully for his poor Servants, with you, and here, beyond what one could have thought, and now the whole hopes of the Enemy is cooped up in this party that marcht by Carlisle yesterday . . . The Lord keep his Servants humble but believing himself, and let every one bestir himself, and play the man (or rather the Christian) in this hour. I must beg pardon for not writing to any others, being weary, and the Messenger taking Horse. My humble and hearty remembrance to Mr. Roe.

"I am, Sir,

"Your Honour's most cordial and humble Servant,

GEORGE DOWNING."

I have chosen to give the last part of the letter rather than the strictly military part, as its phraseology will serve to remind the reader that George Downing had not long since been preacher in "Colonel Okye his regiment." This is the letter that was sent to the Lord Mayor by the Council of State to be published "at Paul's."

The next letter describes the battle of Worcester (Sept. 3, 1651) so well that—especially as the art of writing good military dispatches is rare, I give it in full :[1]

Mr. G. Downing to Lord . . .

May it please your Lordship—The Lord is still triumphing. This day last year was the great appearance at Dunbar, and this day again the Lord hath disposed for such a work.

This morning lieutenant-general Fleetwood advanced with his horse and foot, to which were added Captain Goffe's, and major-general Deane's regiments of foot (major-general Deane being himself with him), and lieutenant-general Fleetwood and Colonel Twisleton's regiment of horse. Between one and two this afternoon, he got to Powick bridge, upon Tame, which was kept by them, with horse and foot : the dispute began very hot presently ; they brought up the river with them twenty great boats, with planks. My lord general fell presently to work ; and in half an hour one bridge was made over Severn, and another over Tame, just where both rivers run into one, and forthwith a party of foot ran down over

[1] *From Memorials of the Great Civil War in England from* 1646 *to* 1652, by Henry Cary, Vol. II, pp. 357–9, 1842.

the bridge over Severn ; who began on the side of Tame towards Worcester to skirmish. While lieutenant-general Fleetwood was still hot in dispute with the enemy at Powick bridge, then captain Ingoldsby's and captain Fairfax's regiment were drawn over Severn also ; then twenty horse ; then the life-guard ; then my lord general's regiment of horse ; and so, one party after another. The dispute was from hedge to hedge, and very hot ; sometimes more with foot than with horse and foot. The life-guard made a gallant charge, so did my lord general's regiment of horse ; and, indeed, all who came to it did their parts gallantly, through the Lord's power in and upon them. The dispute continued to the evening, all along with very great heat ; and about sunset we had beaten into Worcester, and our men possessed of St. John's at the bridge end.

While we were thus hot in debate, the enemy drew forth horse and foot on the other side the town towards our men, who were left there ; and after a while there was a very desperate charge on that side also, between them and ours, both horse and foot, where was Colonel Pride.

In conclusion, our men there also put them to the rout, and pursued them to the very town, possessed the great fort, and also that part of the city of Worcester. Truly our work is all wonders. I can inform your lordship but little what is done, only that, so far as my eyes could on the hurry take up, there are more slain than were at Dunbar : as for prisoners, I cannot tell what number, (they being not yet brought together), nor who are taken ; only Major-general Petscotty and Captain Ardrosse and Captain Cronlockes are taken, with many others ; it is thought Massey is killed. Of our side, I know none of note killed but quartermaster-general Moseley ; and, as far as yet I can judge, not an hundred of our private soldiery. Our word was "the Lord of Hosts." In the evening, we could see them fly out of the further side of Worcester, horse and foot. Night cuts off[f] our pursuit, but major-general Harrison is sent after them, and notice given to colonel Lilburne and others. Captain Howard is wounded ; Major-general Lambert's horse shot. Your lordship will I hope pardon my hasty scribbling. We long for the appearance of the day, when we also look for the Lord's further appearance.

I am,
My Lord,
Your lordship's most humble servant,
G. Downing.

Near Worcester,
Sept. 3, 1651 ;
nine at night.

Through such a letter as George Downing's written as night drew on over the battle-scene of Worcester, in the short sentence, "Our word was 'the Lord of Hosts,'" or through those magnificent lines of Andrew Marvell :

> "When up the armèd mountains of Dunbar
> He marched, and through deep Severn ending war,"

it is possible still to hear, in the annihilation of the centuries which art alone can accomplish, the tramp of horses and of men, and to see, leading the van in person, the tremendous figure of Cromwell.[1]

But George Downing was not a mere writer of dispatches. In a letter written by Emmanuel Downing to the younger Winthrop on January 7, 1651/2, after referring to the battle of Worcester, and how subsequently "my sonne in October last was sent [with others] into Scotland to settle it (as Wales is)" he says that at Dunbar (Sept. 3, 1650) "George received 3 great wounds in his arme besides others, but is well againe."[2]

After Dunbar and Worcester, victories as absolute as any in the history of war (alas, that we do not know precisely to what extent the preliminary secret intelligence of George Downing contributed to their completeness), the Royalist cause collapsed for a decade. Henceforth the Scoutmaster-General's activities were less definitively military though—as my summarized extracts from the *Calendars of State Papers* have shown, hardly less arduous.

Still, in the year 1654, George Downing allowed himself a little relaxation : he married. Here, also, he displayed his customary prudence, and perhaps acted—by anticipation—upon the advice given by Tennyson's farmer. But whether he married for love, for birth, for beauty, or for money it is pointless to speculate ; probably it was for all four, for he married Frances Howard, daughter of Sir

1 "The Lord General did lead the van in person," so another spectator described it. Firth's *Oliver Cromwell*, p. 291.

2 *Mass. Hist. Socs. Colls.*, Series IV, Vol. VI, pp. 77–8.

William Howard, Knight, and sister " illustrissimi Caroli Howardi de Naworth in Comit : Cumbriae " afterwards first Earl of Carlisle.

The marriage seemed of sufficient importance to a contemporary poet, Payne Fisher, to call for a wedding poem of very considerable length in Latin hexameters.

The poet begins with the conventional invitation to the Satyrs, Dryads, Nyads and the golden nymphs of Venus to attend. Next he refers with tact to the alliance of the Gryphon and Lion—the heraldic devices of Downing and Howard. The servants of the house must do their part in preparation, must bring out " ornamenta domus." Then follows a panegyric of the famous Howard pedigree. Downing's pedigree not being so distinguished the poet concentrates on his personal merits. How shall he describe the man, his prodigious vigilance, his daring exploits, specially in Scotland—doubtless a reference to those wounds at Dunbar ? How shall he describe those frequent night watches, how his mental acumen, his ingenuity, his various honours, how his thousand labours undertaken for the fatherland, and the perils to life itself ? Now Downing is rewarded, and enjoys tranquillity ; now the lightnings cease, and Mars gives place to Venus. Celebrated Downing ! happy in his exploits, happier rather in his bride Frances, from whose breast so many charms shine—*irradiant dotes* (perhaps the poet was thinking also of dowries !). Her beauty surpasses any known even in times of antiquity, whose heroines the very illustrious Marquess of our Winchester has celebrated.[1] Then fol-

[1] Sir John Paulet, 5th Marquess of Winchester, the hero of the siege of Basing (1643–5), had translated *The Gallery of Heroick Women* from the French in 1652. His first wife was the subject of Milton's sonorous epitaph (see *D.N.B.*). *The Gallery of Heroick Women* (its French title is *La Galerie des Femmes Fortes*, and its French author le Père Pierre le Moyne de la Compagnie de Jésus) contains accounts of the gallant women of all ages—gallant Jewesses, Barbarian women, Roman women, Christian women—the latter including Joan of Arc and Mary Queen of Scots. Lord Winchester's " address to the Ladies of this Nation " is worthy of this beautiful folio-volume, containing splendid engravings, to which it is the introduction :

lows the appeal usual in verse on these occasions that the night may be long when the bride approaches the bridal chamber, and when :

> " Ostentat decus ipsa suae inviolabile formae,
> Et jucunda viri pertentant gaudia mentem."

Finally, may the goddess who attends over childbirth be present at the appropriate moment, and perpetuate the Downing posterity.[1]

The Downing posterity in the male line died out in the fourth generation ; but the poet's wish has been granted, in one way, far more generously than even he could have anticipated. For Sir George Downing has given his name to the most famous street in the world, while his wealth was eventually the means of founding Downing College, in the University of Cambridge.[2] The Downing name, therefore, is likely to be perpetuated long after names more illustrious have passed into obscurity or oblivion.

" Ladies—Methinks I see your curious Eyes advancing apace to behold this Noveltie, this fair *Gallery of Heroick Women*, first erected in *France*, to the Honour and instruction of your Sex, and now transplanted into *England* upon the same account. . . ."

[1] Payne Fisher's *Inauguratio Olivariana* and other poems including " In Nuptias Viri Honoratissimi Georgii Downingi campo exploratoris Generalissimi," etc., pp. 93–7, 1654. My rendering is, of course, merely a brief summary.

[2] The College was actually founded by Sir George Downing's grandson, also Sir George, but the wealth which made the foundation possible was accumulated by the subject of this biography.

CHAPTER FOUR

GEORGE DOWNING'S CAREER FROM 1655 TO 1660: I. AMBASSADOR AND POLITICIAN, 1655–1657

What may not then our Isle presume
While victory his crest does plume?
What may not others fear,
If thus he crowns each year?
. . . . .
But thou, the war's and fortune's son,
March indefatigably on;
And for the last effect,
Still keep the sword erect:

Besides the force it has to fright
The spirits of the shady night,
The same arts that did gain
A power must it maintain.

—ANDREW MARVELL.
(An Horatian Ode upon Cromwell's return from Ireland.)

BETWEEN December, 1653, and September, 1658, England, under the Protectorship of Oliver Cromwell, was the most dreaded power in Europe. In May, 1654, the Dutch were forced to make a disadvantageous peace after the two years' naval war. In the same year Sweden, Denmark and Portugal were glad to make treaties of friendship with the Protector. Spain and France also courted him, and from October, 1655, France, mainly through the conciliatory genius of Cardinal Mazarin, won the diplomatic day as against her rival Spain. The commercial treaty between England and France then concluded was followed in March, 1657, by a real alliance, with consequences of disaster for Spain.

Thus Andrew Marvell, in the first of the verses with which I have headed this chapter, anticipated, with prophetic foresight—for he wrote his poem in 1650—the pre-eminent position of England in Europe between 1654 and 1658.

After all, what could not be accomplished by a man who was not only himself at once a military, political and diplomatic genius, but who knew how to choose the best men to carry out his designs ? Monk, Lambert and Fleetwood were in his army, Blake, Montagu and Penn in his fleet, John Milton and Andrew Marvell drafted his diplomatic dispatches, the profoundly able Thurloe was his Secretary of State, Meadowe, Lockhart and Downing were among his Ambassadors.

For the time was now approaching when George Downing was to be employed on his first diplomatic mission. With the conclusion of the Dutch War there was not so much need for the technical services of the Scoutmaster-General ; specially as the domestic secret service was being brought into a state of high efficiency by Secretary Thurloe. The talents of George Downing could be more usefully employed in other directions, though he still seems to have retained, till his appointment as Ambassador to the United Provinces in December, 1657, his title of Scoutmaster-General.

In 1654 the main events in his life were his marriage, described at the end of the last chapter, and his selection in September as representative of Edinburgh in the first Protectorate Parliament. To the same month belongs a very interesting letter which will be found among the Egerton MSS.[1] in the British Museum, a letter addressed by Downing to General Monk describing the accident which happened to Cromwell in Hyde Park on September 29, 1654. I am not aware that this letter has ever hitherto been printed, and in any case it is sufficiently interesting to merit production here. It explains itself, and runs as follows :

[1] *B.M. Egerton MSS.*, 2618, f. 46

Right Honble.

Yesterday his highnesse being in hide parke would needs in a frollicke drive his coach himselfe (as formerly he had done divers times), ye horses being unruly ranne away w^h^ him [and] threw him out of ye coach boxe upon ye loose harnesse wher ye horses dragged him till his shoe coming off he fell to ye ground, his forehead is a little broken and his elbow but ye worst is his side w^h^ is much bruised yet I trust wth out danger, he slept well last night and is not feavourish. As strang a part of it as any is ye live pistoll fired in his pocket and went of, w^h^out doing any hurt. ye Parliament yesterday passed in a grand Committee y^t^ [that] ye power of pardoning all offences but treason and murder shold be in ye Protector. This day the Committee voted y^t^ [that] he shold hav ye benefit of all confiscations & forfeytures according to law wch are not already granted away or invested in any other, to be disposed as ye Parliam^t^ shall think fitt.

I am

Right Honble

yr most faithful Servant

G. Downing.

Axeyard 7^ber^ 30th, 54.

There is a Committee now appointed for ye affayres of Scotland and another for Ireland. Pray let me have yr directions w^t^ you think fitt for ye Committee to consider of for Scotland.

for ye Right Honble Gen. Monk

Comander in Chiefe of ye fources in Scotland

G.D. these

Scotland.

Apart from certain, more or less routine, activities, of which I have given a summary account from the *Calendars of State Papers Domestic* in the last chapter, the next important event in George Downing's life is his appointment as Envoy Extraordinary in July, 1655, in the matter of the massacre of the Vaudois by the Duke of Savoy's troops.

It will be remembered that the Vaudois or Waldenses, dwelling in Piedmont, had, from the Middle Ages, been regarded as heretics by the Church of Rome, and were to all intents and purposes the earliest Protestants. After age-long persecution they had at last enjoyed, for some four generations, the tranquillity of a circumscribed and

reluctant toleration. Such tranquillity, however, was too good to last, and on January 25, 1655, a ducal edict ordered them within three days to depart from nine of their communes in the valley of Luserna in Piedmont, and to confine themselves within the original limits marked out for toleration in 1561 higher up in the same valley. The Vaudois remonstrated, delayed, finally resisted by force, and in April were pillaged by Ducal troops, and many massacred. The news did not reach England, apparently, till the middle of May. The Protector and his Council, and indeed all England, were horrified. On May 25 Latin letters drafted by Milton, and signed by Cromwell, were sent to all the Protestant Courts of Europe, appealing to them to assist the Protector in measures of intervention. At the same time letters of vigorous protest were sent to the Court of Savoy, and to the King of France, who was suspected of complicity. Samuel Morland was dispatched as a special envoy to remonstrate personally on the Protector's behalf with the Duke of Savoy, and Mr. Pell, Envoy in Switzerland, was told to stir up the Protestant Swiss cantons to intervene.

There followed the inevitable diplomatic delays, and at the end of some seven or eight weeks [1] Cromwell decided to send another special envoy, Mr. George Downing, who should deliver a further protest to the French king, Louis XIV—though in reality it was for Mazarin's eye as supreme in France at that time ; the envoy was thereafter to proceed to Geneva to concert relief measures with Messrs. Morland and Pell, concluding his mission at the Ducal Court at Turin.

The second letter to the French king is dated July 29, and thereafter George Downing hastened off on his long journey. The letter urged the King of France to exercise stronger pressure than hitherto, so as to induce the Duke of Savoy to stop persecution, for though Louis had replied

[1] As early as July 17 the draft instructions for Downing "employed to the Protestant Cantons of Switzerland" were read and approved by the Council of State. *Cal. State Papers Dom.*, 1655, p. 247.

to the first letter saying he had already protested to the Duke of his own accord, nothing very positive had resulted. A special note to Cardinal Mazarin introduced Mr. George Downing.[1]

With the aid of the Thurloe State Papers, it is possible to accompany George Downing on his difficult mission. In a letter dated August 6/16, 1655, from Boulogne, he describes the courteous reception accorded to him on his arrival at Calais, and asks Thurloe to let the Governor have a pass for six horses from England :

" Truely I think it were not amisse to oblige the governor so farr as to let him have his passe be custome free ; had it not been for the great civility he showed me, probably I had had some small encounter with the [Royalist] blades at Calais." [2]

A little later, in a very long letter to Thurloe, George Downing describes his journey to La Fère, and his negotiations there with Cardinal Mazarin :

" to whom I presented his hyghnesse's letter, and as well as I could in Lattin communicated to him what I had farther in command. I was full two houres in private with him ; he told me, that of all things in the world he desired a right understanding with his hyghnesse. . . . That as to the protestants in Fraunce, as he had been their friend to keep them from wrong, since he managed affayres heer, so if ther were any thing, that his hyghnesse would have done on their behalfe, which might stand with the honour of Fraunce, he would do it, thow for his part he had not interposed on behalfe of the catholiques in England ; and upon this particular he enlarged much. That the accommodation now in Piemont was by his master's intercession."

[1] For a detailed and dispassionate description of the Vaudois affair see S. R. Gardiner's *History of the Commonwealth and Protectorate*, Vol. III, chapter xlvii ; for an excellent short account see pp. 38–44, Masson's *Life of Milton*, Vol. V, also pp. 184–91 for translations of the Latin letters to the various Courts of Europe ; for the activities of the devoted Messrs. Morland and Pell, Vol. I, Vaughan's *Protectorate of Cromwell* passim ; for Cromwell's foreign policy generally, the chapter therein in Firth's *Oliver Cromwell*.

[2] Thurloe, III, 696.

The Cardinal then spoke of Spannish affairs—that he would make no treaty or peace with Spain "but with his hyghnesse consent." Then he revealed a secret—which must have been dear to the heart of the Scoutmaster-General—how some one who "should have commanded in the fleet, that is gone with Penn," had betrayed the secret of the expedition to the Spanniards.

The Cardinal treated Downing with every imaginable sign of respect, provided him lodging in the Governor's quarters, "sent me his owne supper with this complement, that it being too late to provide anything, he had sent what was made ready for himselfe, and would seek a supper himselfe; he also sent his owne plate and servants to wayte, and the captain of his guard. . . . The captain of the cardinall's guard discoursed much with some in my company of the cardinall's greatness, worth, and allyances, which he had in Fraunce, but withall told one of my company, that notwithstanding all, he looked not upon himselfe as safe, without his hyghnesse's friendship; and that he was the only man could thwart his designes." In the same letter Downing describes his continued journey towards Geneva, though "(as we have it heer) the businesse in Savoy is concluded." He ends his letter with a request "for more money. I am, I am sure, as good an husband for his hyghnesse as I can be, but I shall spend per mensem 500 l. sterling; and the letter of credit I had was but for 12,000 livres, which is but between 900 l. and 1,000 l. English.

Your most faithfull humble
servant,

Aug. 25/Sept. 4. George Downing." [1]

George Downing was right in thinking that the "business in Savoy is concluded," for on August 19 the Duke of Savoy, by the Treaty of Pignerol, restored the Vaudois to most of their former privileges of residence and worship. This result had been brought about by a variety of causes.

[1] Thurloe, III, 734–5.

Mazarin, impressed by the knowledge of Cromwell's further intervention, had already exerted the needed pressure at the Court of Turin before Downing arrived at La Fère in person ; moreover, it was rumoured that a British fleet might attack some appropriate Mediterranean port. Nevertheless, Downing's mission had not been in vain. His invaluable letter to Secretary Thurloe must have been of great assistance to the Protector in enabling him to make up his mind as to the Agreement, commercial and otherwise, with France, so long delayed. This Agreement was, in fact, signed on October 24.

Though Cromwell was not satisfied that the Protestant cause had been adequately vindicated by the Pignerol Treaty, it was not possible for him to do more at the moment, and Downing, who had dutifully pushed on from La Fère, found letters recalling him urgently when he reached Geneva.

Two letters which he wrote to Thurloe on his way back throw vivid light on the condition of France, and the delays and difficulties of travel at that time.

In a letter dated from Lyons, September 14/24, 1655, he says he is returning with all haste in accordance with the instructions received at Geneva, " but I have a wearysome journey." He hopes to leave Lyons on *Saturday* and arrive in Paris on the following *Wednesday*.[1]

From Paris he writes a letter dated Sept. 22/Oct. 2, 1655, stating it will take him five days to get from there to Calais. Post-horses are not procurable " for love or money." All horses and carts along the road have been conscripted to carry provisions for Condé's army in Flanders—Condé, who was then fighting against his own country in alliance with the Spanniards. " I shall make all the haste I can, and I trust we shall be preserved. There are divers partyes of souldiers now quartred in the way, being there placed, to force the country to bring in their carts and horses."[2]

Downing arrived back safely, for on October 24 he is

[1] Thurloe, IV, 31–2.

[2] Id., IV, 47.

instructed to attend the Council of State next day to give an account of his mission.[1]

Thus barely ten years since George Downing had been earning a precarious livelihood as a preacher to New England seamen, he is regarded as a suitable person to negotiate with the greatest man in Europe, after Cromwell. For Cardinal Mazarin, when Downing talked to him in difficult Latin, had been Chief Minister of France for twelve years. He had extricated France from the Thirty Years War with honour at the Peace of Westphalia ; he had triumphed over the Fronde commotions (1648–53)—a kind of caricature of the revolutionary troubles in England ; he had amassed wealth beyond the dreams of avarice ; above all, he was educating, for his dazzling career of glory, the youthful Louis XIV.[2]

Just over a year after his employment on the Vaudois mission, Cromwell selected George Downing to represent him at the Hague.

But before journeying with Downing to the Hague in ambassadorial splendour, it is necessary to pause for a moment, and observe him as politician, as representative of a Scottish constituency in the second Protectorate Parliament. If we understand Lord Broghill aright, in a letter [3] he wrote to Thurloe on August 19, 1656, it had been no easy matter to induce the Scots to return the redoubtable Scoutmaster-General.[4] " I had almost forgot to tell you, George Downing is chosen for the burroughs joined with Haddington, but I was faine to send for the chiefe of them, and deale earnestly with them."

[1] *Cal. State Papers Dom.*, 1655, p. 394.

[2] For the French view that Cromwell was out-manœuvred diplomatically during the Vaudois negotiations by Cardinal Mazarin, and generally, in defeating Cromwell's aim of a Protestant league, see Mons. A. Chéruel's *Histoire de France sous le Ministère de Mazarin* (1651–1661), Tom. II, pp. 389–90.

[3] Thurloe, V, 323.

[4] Still so described by General Monk in a letter dated August 30, 1656. Thurloe, V, 367.

Through the devoted note-taking of Thomas Burton, who kept a diary while he was a Member of the Parliaments of Oliver and Richard Cromwell from 1656 to 1659, it is possible to obtain an intimate view of George Downing and his contemporaries in their capacity as Parliament men.

From this view two impressions emerge with extraordinary distinctness—one, that the humour of the House of Commons was of very much the same kind nearly three centuries ago as it is to-day ; the other, that its attitude on fundamental questions was wholly different.

Here are two examples of House of Commons humour in 1657 : they are selected because George Downing figures in them.

On May 25, 1657, in the course of a brief debate on the mode of procedure as to the formal presentation of " the humble Petition and Advice " to the Protector : " amidst this debate his Highness's carriages passed by, and Mr. Downing espied them, and said his Highness was passed by. Some called out, ' Scout, scout ! ' and *altum risum*. The former debates fell asleep."[1]

Again, on Monday, June 8, 1657, the House having waited for half an hour for a Minister (of religion) to read prayers, and none coming, " Major-General Whalley told Mr. Downing that he was a Minister, and he would have him to perform the work. Mr. Downing acknowledged he was once a Minister "—but, evidently, did not feel up to prayer, so the House had to proceed without any.[2]

Schoolboy humour, perhaps, but, after all, schoolboy humour, in the long run, is usually the best, and certainly the most enduring. Individually, most pleasant men, and, collectively, all men retain it to their dying day.

The question whether or not there is such a thing as progress is a favourite theme both with historians and philosophers, a theme upon which many different conclusions are reached. To Lord Macaulay, with his immense learning—perhaps, all round, the best-read man who ever

[1] Burton, *Diary*, II, 122. [2] Id., II, 192.

lived—and with his robust faith in humanity, there is no doubt : progress is a fundamental fact of which history conveys decisive evidence. To Dean Inge, learned and philosophical, with his less robust outlook but more mystical mind, progress, so far from being a fact is merely, as regards humanity—and not the individual soul—a questionable possibility. To Lord Acton, who was at once a great historian, a great man of affairs, and a great mystic, the proof of the progress of humanity is to be found in the history of liberty. Throughout his historical essays there is the recurrent thought, as insistent as a melody in music, that in the ever-broadening conception of freedom, faith in the progress of humanity finds its justification and its fulfilment.

There is a description of Lord Acton in Bryce's *Biographical Studies* which has never ceased to move me ; it is as follows :

"Twenty years ago, late at night, in his library at Cannes, he expounded to me his view of how such a history of Liberty might be written, and in what wise it might be made the central thread of all history. He spoke for six or seven minutes only ; but he spoke like a man inspired, seeming as if, from some mountain summit high in air, he saw beneath him the far-winding path of human progress from dim Cimmerian shores of pre-historic shadow into the fuller yet broken and fitful light of the modern time. The eloquence was splendid, but greater than the eloquence was the penetrating vision which discovered through all events and in all ages the play of those moral forces, now creating, now destroying, always transmuting, which had moulded and remoulded institutions, and had given to the human spirit its ceaselessly-changing forms of energy. It was as if the whole landscape of history had been suddenly lit up by a burst of sunlight. I have never heard from any other lips any discourse like this, nor from his did I ever hear the like again."[1]

It will now be convenient, with this preface in mind, to attend the House of Commons in December, 1656.

1 *Studies in Contemporary Biography*, by James Bryce, pp. 396–7, 2nd ed., 1904.

Throughout that month, at intervals, the House was occupied with the case of James Naylor, the Quaker. Altogether, the case was debated exhaustively on fourteen separate days.

James Naylor was a Quaker, who, according to the summary of the Report of the Parliamentary Committee who had examined him, had "assumed the gesture, words, names and attributes of our Saviour Christ"; notably had he acted thus when, a few months previously, he had entered Bristol after the manner of Christ's entry into Jerusalem. It was further alleged that his principles were "that he may lie with any woman that is of his own judgment."

On December 5 this report was presented to the House. Thereupon began a ten days' debate, of which the first three days were spent in considering if Naylor was guilty of blasphemy, and the remaining seven on the question of punishment. On four further days, after sentence had been pronounced, the case again came up in reference to various petitions presented to the House, and to a letter from the Protector asking under what authority the House had punished him.[1]

Let us listen to George Downing on various days of the debate. I give what seemed to me the best passages in his speeches, with now and again a remark from the other numerous speakers. It should be clearly understood that Downing represented the *moderate* men: he was against the death penalty, but against letting Naylor off without punishment. In considering Naylor's case it is important to remember, firstly, that George Fox very definitely in his Journal condemns Naylor's Bristol proceedings—"James had run out into imaginations," he says; and, secondly, that Naylor profited, apparently, by his imprisonment, for he himself ultimately repented of his extravagances.

[1] An admirable account of Naylor's case will be found in Sir Charles Firth's *The Last Two Years of the Protectorate*, 1656–1658, Vol. I, chapter iii. For detail as to the other speakers, and fuller detail as to the case generally, the reader is referred to that account. I have concentrated more fully on Downing's share as reported in Burton's *Diary*.

December 5, 1656, Mr. Downing. "Here is no liberty of conscience in this case, for he makes himself God himself. Our God is here supplanted. If he be God, then we must worship him. He is our God as well as the women's God. If a devil, is it fit he should live? Then you will have two Gods. . . . If ever there was a business for a Parliament this is it. To supplant your God, oh, horrid! If such a thing as zeal is to be allowed, certainly in this. And we cannot have too great detestation of it."[1]

Just previously Major-General Skippon had spoken insisting that "their (Quakers') principles strike both at Ministry and Magistracy."[2]

December 8. Downing had spoken on the 6th, urging the House to proceed to judgment then and there, but the House rightly declined to be hurried. On this day, the 6th, Naylor was brought in person before the House. He denied the charge of immorality, but more or less admitted the facts alleged against him as to his Bristol entry, though he claimed that his expressions and acts were symbolical.[3]

Mr. Downing . . . . "No offence can be higher than treason, none higher than blasphemy. Let us not lose this word, lest we have none. Observe how careful they are not to give honour to any authority. You saw how he behaved himself at the bar [wouldn't take off his hat or kneel]. Not a cap to you, though you be gods in one sense; yet he will take cap, knee, kisses and all reverence. His distinction of visible and invisible makes his blasphemy plain. . . . I am as much for tender consciences as any man; but I deny that this has any share in such liberty. . . . God could have made him a pillar of salt immediately if he had pleased; have struck him dead, but he has left it to you to vindicate his honour and glory. Now see what you will do. This is the day of temptation and trial of your zeal. I will call this offence no less than blasphemy. I desire you would vote it so—then speak of a bill for his punishment."

[1] Burton, *Diary*, I, p. 27. [2] Id., I, 25.
[3] Id., I, 52; also Firth (see footnote, p. 72), Vol. I, p. 87.

Lord President. "This gentleman has spoken very zealously, yet they were honest men, too, that called for fire from heaven, and we know how they were reproved." (Luke ix. 55.)[1]

On December 9 the House had resolved that Naylor was guilty of "horrid blasphemy." On December 10, 11, 12 and 13 the debate was on punishment, the power of the House to punish, and if so the kind of punishment. On December 10, Major-General Whalley had urged sentence of death, with six weeks' reprieve to give Naylor an opportunity of retracting. The debate continues.

December 15. *Mr. Downing* . . . . "It is clear to me that this offender deserves death, but that there is any law of the land in force against it, I am altogether unsatisfied, having heard of doctors of the law declare themselves so freely in it. . . . I grant these penal laws made against blasphemy are in pursuance of the moral law; but how far are these penal laws binding to us? There is not one commandment in the whole ten that any statute in this land is made in pursuance of it. If so, they ought to be at all time alike moral and not to be altered." [He runs through the Commandments and shows the differences between Jewish and English practice of punishment.] . . . "All nations, all ages, have varied the punishment of such offences, according to the conveniency of times and seasons. Know we not that this is the issue of our great liberty? Have not Rantism, and other extravagant opinions, been all this while dispensed withal? There are thousands of this man's opinion, and must we take them all off by a law, or this person for them all, by a law *ex post facto*? It will not do your end. I am not satisfied that he should be put to death for this offence, but shall agree with the smaller punishment."[2]

December 16. The House had decided in favour of its power to act judicially. On the other hand, they had decided against the death penalty. On this day they

[1] Burton, *Diary*, I, 60–2.
[2] Id., I, pp. 143–6.

debate what sort of lesser penalty they shall impose. Listen to a variety of speakers.

"*Colonel White* proposed that his tongue might be bored through.

"*Colonel Barclay*, that his hair might be cut off.

"*Major-General Haines*, that his tongue might be slit or bored through, and that he might be stigmatized with the letter B.

"*Colonel Coker*, that his hair might be cut off.

"*Sir Thomas Wroth*. Slit his tongue, or bore it, and brand him with the letter B.

"*Major-General Whalley*. Do not cut off his hair, that will make the people believe that the Parliament of England are of opinion that our Saviour Christ wore his hair so, and this will make all people in love with the fashion.

"*Sir Gilbert Pickering*. His hard labour and imprisonment will be sufficient."

[. . . other speakers.]

"*Mr. Downing*. You ought to do something with that tongue that has bored through God. You ought to bore his tongue through. You punish a swearer so, and have some whipped through an affront to your Members, in the case of Noble." [Other speakers.]

"*Colonel Holland*. You have done what becomes Magistrates. Now I would have you do like Christians, and not be too severe." [1]

But the House was against Colonel Holland. Naylor was sentenced to be pilloried at Westminster and at the Old Exchange, to be whipped through the streets, to have his tongue bored through, to be stigmatized with the letter B, to be taken to Bristol and there whipped, and finally to be imprisoned at Bridewell. "God has given me a body; God will, I hope, give me a spirit to endure it. The Lord lay not these things to your charge." So Naylor spoke on hearing his sentence.

It is unnecessary to linger further over this scene, or to describe the details of the punishment—except that

[1] Burton, *Diary*, I, 153–4.

Downing recommended, on December 20, a short suspension owing to Naylor's temporary collapse after part of his terrible ordeal. On the other hand, on December 23, he was against the petition to remit further punishment altogether. Nor need we listen to the debate on December 26 on Cromwell's letter asking upon what grounds the House had proceeded, though a sentence in a speech of Downing's on this point is noteworthy : " It is dangerous either for him to question our power, or for us to question his, in matters that are for the public safety ; we must both wink."[1] So the House, and Cromwell, winked. Naylor went through his bitter punishment, and was not released from prison till September 8, 1659.

It is idle to indulge in historical recriminations. In the seventeenth century men did not understand Toleration.[2] Nor can governments govern far in advance of public opinion. Moreover, in order to avoid the sin of self-complaisance, it is necessary to consider the present, not only in relation to the past, but to the future. Thus in a century or two, perhaps in much less, posterity will read with uneasy feelings numerous speeches by public men made during, and even since, the European catastrophe 1914–18.

[1] Burton, *Diary*, I, 254.

[2] Compare, for instance, the Catholic persecution of the Vaudois, the policy of Laud towards the Puritans, and the policy of the Puritans towards the Quakers and Catholics. The Puritans of Massachusetts were especially cruel to the Quakers. See *The Foundation of New England*, pp. 138–40, by J. T. Adams, 1921.

CHAPTER FIVE

II. AMBASSADOR AND POLITICIAN : 1657 TO THE DEATH OF CROMWELL

> Think ye see
> The very persons of our noble story
> As they were living ; think you see them great,
> And follow'd with the general throng and sweat
> Of thousand friends ; then, in a moment see
> How soon this mightiness meets misery.
>
> —*Henry VIII*, Prologue, ls., 25–30.

THROUGH the eyes of the excellent Parliamentary diarist, Thomas Burton, it will be desirable to catch one more glimpse of George Downing in the rôle of politician, before embarking with him for the Hague.

It is January 19, 1657. The plotter Sindercombe has just been arrested in an attempt to fire Whitehall, hoping that Cromwell would perish in the flames. The House has been informed of the devilish design by Secretary Thurloe, only one design of several during the past few months to assassinate the Protector. The House is horrified at the story, and overwhelmed with a sense of relief that the plot has been discovered in time. They vote for a Public Thanksgiving, and an address of congratulation to his Highness. Then up rises the member for Somerset, John Ashe. Something more is needed, he says, and plainly suggests that the security of the realm depends on Cromwell's becoming King—a return to "government according to the ancient constitution."

Thereupon a vigorous debate begins ; the representa-

tives of the Army, and of Republican theories, are bitterly hostile to all idea of kingship. But John Ashe finds supporters. Amongst them is Mr. George Downing. Downing makes a speech which the reader will at once see comes from a mature, sagacious and, indeed, brilliant mind.

Mr. Downing : " I believe that motion is of more concernment to you than the Bill [the Militia Bill] before you. Government is the foundation of security. . . . Those governments are best which are upon proof, and long experience of our ancestors (and not such as are only in notion), such whereby the people may understand their liberty, and the Lord Protector his privilege. The people must not be fitted to the government but the government to the people. . . . Men go away, but constitutions never fall. This is no merriment. It is a matter which ought to be seriously weighed. When men pull down their houses that are ruinous, they try awhile by setting up shrouds, but finding them drop in, they build them houses again. I cannot propound a better expedient for the preservation both of his Highness and the people, than by establishing the government upon the old and tried foundation, as was moved to you by a grave and well-experienced person. I shall not enter into the merits of the business, but desire this may be seriously debated, and a day appointed." [1]

It is not possible here, nor necessary, to follow the long and tangled story of the offer of the Crown to Cromwell, of his hesitations, and of his final refusal. But Downing's speech is notable, not merely for the good things it contains which are true for all times, but because it throws a remarkable light on his character. He had watched the course of the Revolution, and his one desire was that the whirlwind should be controlled. For this reason, and partly, no doubt, for purely self-interested motives, he was a passionate supporter of Cromwell as the one power capable of imposing order. The Puritan Revolution left behind three permanent impressions in

[1] Burton, *Diary*, I, 363–4. For the various proposals that Cromwell should assume the Crown and their history, see Firth's *The Last Years of the Protectorate*, 1656–1658, 2 vols., passim.

the minds of Englishmen : a horror of civil commotion, a horror of militarism, and a deep distrust of what came to be called Enthusiasm. In Downing's mind the first impression was certainly predominant, though, were he capable of blushing, he would doubtless have blushed in maturer years if reminded of his career as a preacher.

Early in December, 1657, Cromwell decided to send George Downing to the Hague, as his Ambassador to the United Provinces.[1] In order to make clear the importance of the appointment, and to follow Downing's career as Ambassador, it will be necessary to take a brief review of the situation in Europe at this time, as it specially affected England. For George Downing at the Hague was at the hub of the diplomatic universe.

In 1657–8 the four pivotal figures in European politics were Cromwell in England, Mazarin in France, Jan de Witt in the Netherlands, and Charles X in Sweden. Spain had no great statesman to direct her fortunes, which were rapidly sinking beneath the combined blows of Cromwell and Mazarin.

Cromwell's main interest in European politics was the cause of Protestantism, and he was always hankering after a great Protestant League which should overwhelm Antichrist in the person of the Pope, the King of Spain and the Ruler of the Holy Roman Empire. But, like most Puritans, he tempered, or, perhaps it is fairer to say, was inevitably compelled to temper his religious ideals with a strong and even predominating mixture of what is called "raison d'état." Hence, while on the one hand interposing with marked effect on behalf of the persecuted Vaudois in 1655, hardly a year had elapsed since he had emerged from a victorious naval war with his Protestant neighbours the Dutch (1652–4) : because the Dutch were the greatest trading and naval nation in the world, and therefore the greatest menace to the rising commercial and naval interests of England. Again, while con-

[1] Thurloe, VI, p. 657. Nieuport refers to this decision in a letter dated 4/14 December, 1657.

stantly striving to unite the Protestant states Sweden, Denmark, the United Provinces and the Elector of Brandenburg in a Protestant League against the house of Austria, he had found it impossible not to make an alliance with the great Catholic power of France in the war in which both France and England were involved with Spain.

The great Cardinal's aims, on the other hand, were not in the least religious. As Monsieur Chéruel observes, Mazarin thought "comme Richelieu, que les passions religieuses du seizième siècle avait cédé la place aux intérêts politiques."[1] He desired to make France great, to make her the successor of Spain as the supreme continental power. Accordingly he allied himself with Cromwell, whose war with Spain was partly religious[2] and partly commercial: to Cromwell Spain was the power of the Inquisition; she was also a great Colonial power whose galleons, crammed with pieces of eight and merchandise from Peru and Mexico, were the traditional spoil of British seamen.

In the result Spain was no match for Mazarin and Turenne combined with Cromwell and Blake, and, finally, after Blake's crushing Santa Cruz exploit of 1657, and the disastrous campaign in Flanders of 1658—the battle of the Dunes, the fall of Dunkirk, and the capture of Gravelines and other towns—she was compelled to make the Peace of the Pyrenees in November, 1659, ceding to France, Artois, Roussillon and a part of Flanders.[3] Peace with England followed a year later.

[1] Chéruel, *Histoire de France sous le Ministère de Mazarin* (1651–1661), Vol. II, pp. 389–90.

[2] See Cromwell's justification for his war with Spain and his friendship for France, as made admirably clear by himself in his "Instructions unto collonel William Lockart sent unto the french king," printed by Professor Firth (from the original in the P.R.O.) in the *English Historical Review*, Vol. XXI, pp. 742–6. ". . . the one [France] gives libertie of conscience to the professors of the protestant religion, and the other [Spain] persecuteing it with losse of life and estate. . . ."

[3] Monsieur Chéruel thus sums up Cardinal Mazarin's services to France: "Il pouvait dire, en mourant, qu'il laissait deux filles immortelles, la paix de Westphalie, et la paix des Pyrénées. La première avait donné à la France

Jan de Witt, in title Grand Pensionary of Holland since 1653, and in effect Prime Minister of the United Provinces, was also a statesman of the Mazarin school. That is to say, Trade and Colonies being the mainsprings of Dutch power—since, and indeed before, the Peace of Munster had ended, for the United Provinces, the Eighty Years War in 1648, the Dutch had been pre-eminent in both—other considerations were subordinate. Thus Cromwell could never induce him to join a Protestant League. Bishop Burnet—his younger contemporary—who regarded de Witt as, in certain aspects, the ablest Minister the Dutch ever had, thus describes him : " He knew nothing of modern history, nor of the state of courts : and was eminently defective in all points of form. But he laid down this for a maxim, that all princes and states followed their own interests : so by observing what their true interests were he thought he could without great intelligence calculate what they were about. He did not enough consider how far passions, amours, humours, and opinions wrought on the world, chiefly on princes." [1]

De Witt's path—for his aim was the maintenance of Dutch commercial and colonial power in peace—was almost impossibly difficult. The Dutch East India Company was in constant friction with the English East India Company in the Indian seas, and mutual reprisals were almost matters of routine. Moreover, in all the seas of the world the Navigation Act of 1651 had caused emulous rivalry between the Dutch and English mercantile marine. The object of that Act was to wrest from the Dutch the carrying trade of the world ; [2] hence the stipulation that,

l'Alsace, Brisach et Phillipsbourg ; la seconde l'Artois, le Roussillon et une partie des Flandres. Puisse la France retrouver des Ministres qui lui laissait un pareil heritage. Elle leur pardonnera bien des fautes et bien des faiblesses."—*Ministère de Mazarin*, Vol. III, p. 426.

[1] Burnet's *History of My Own Time*, Airy's edition, Vol. I, p. 394.

[2] " . . . the Dutch are the carriers of the world, the English carry but little, besides their own Merchandizes. . . ." From Thurloe's report, March 28, 1660–1, drawn up by him for the benefit of Lord Clarendon, printed by Professor Firth in *E.H.R.*, Vol. XXI, pp. 319–27.

except in the case of merchandise from the country of origin, all importations to England and her Colonies must be made in English ships. With England's ally, Portugal, too, in days gone by the great pioneer Colonial power, the Dutch were in constant rivalry both in East and West, leading in 1657 to open war on account of the revolt of Brazil from the Dutch, who had previously captured it from the Portuguese.

Again, the Dutch viewed with suspicion the incursion of English forces into Flanders in alliance with the French against the Spaniards, and the capture of Dunkirk (June, 1658), and its immediate transfer to Cromwell (in accordance with his treaty of alliance with Mazarin), made them profoundly apprehensive. Hence Dutch vessels privately assisted the Spaniard in the war, and under Spanish colours preyed on English commerce.

On the other hand, the Dutch were enraged with the English government for insisting on the right of search for contraband carried in neutral (i.e. usually Dutch) ships.[1]

In the North, the Protestant hero, Charles X of Sweden, after crushing Catholic Poland (1655–6), had, in 1657, been forced to turn his brilliant military energies against Protestant, though provoking, Denmark ; after a series of stunning blows he compelled Denmark to the humiliating Peace of Roeskilde in February, 1658. Charles X's Polish victories had already given him a preponderating power in the Eastern Baltic, and his Danish victories, if he chose to exploit them, gave him an even more controlling position in the Western Baltic. Now the Baltic was, of all the seas, essential to Dutch commerce as the highway of their most important trade. The Dutch policy had been, and was, to support Denmark against

[1] "The English found by experience in the warr with Spayne how prejudiciall such an agreement [i.e. to abandon the right of search] would be by what the Dutch practised without it, for by concealinge the Spanish goods in their names, and Ships, the Spanyards drove their trade in security, whilest the English shipps were surprised by their Enemies." See Thurloe's report referred to in preceding footnote.

Sweden, so as to maintain a balance between these powers in the Baltic Sea. England, on the other hand, was sympathetic to Sweden, and was not averse to seeing the Dutch Baltic trade jeopardized, though she, too, preferred a balance in the Baltic in her own commercial interests there. Moreover, Cromwell was always filled with hopes that Charles X —whom he greatly admired—would eventually turn his sword against the house of Austria. Charles was prepared to think of this when he had made himself supreme in all the Baltic regions. In the Prussian parts of those regions a state, destined two and a half centuries later to engulf Europe in catastrophe, was then struggling into youthful prominence under its great Elector, Frederick William of Brandenburg. In 1656 Brandenburg was allied with Charles X against the Poles, in 1657–8 with the Poles against Charles X. Here, then, was another twist in the diplomatic knot, for the Dutch were glad to see Brandenburg turn against Sweden.

Finally, a further source of friction between the English and the Dutch lay in the fact that Charles Stuart's sister was the Princess Royal of Orange, and that the exiled Royalists were constantly passing from Brussels and Flanders, in and out of the United Provinces, though excluded therefrom by the Peace of 1654.[1]

George Downing was sent by Cromwell to the Hague with three main objects. The first and foremost object was to prevent England and the United Provinces from drifting into another war through one or all of the numerous causes which have just been summarized. It is important to realize this, because Downing has so often been accused of fomenting the second Dutch War (1665–7); as to this more will be said hereafter; all that need be said here is that until the diplomatic kaleidoscope had

[1] If the reader desires to explore the complexities of the European situation at this period, of the salient facts of which I have attempted to give some idea in this brief summary, he should consult Vols. IV and V of *The Cambridge Modern History*, and Professor Firth's *The Last Years of the Protectorate*, 1656–1658, Vols. I and II.

revolved after the Restoration, Downing, under circumstances of immense difficulty, managed to maintain his country's prestige in peace. Secondly, Downing was sent to induce the Dutch by every means imaginable to act sincerely with England in mediating between Sweden and Denmark instead of inciting and supporting Denmark against Sweden, as the Dutch were doing both secretly and openly. Thirdly, he was to offer England's mediation in the war declared by the United Provinces upon Portugal in October, 1657, in consequence of the affair of Brazil.[1]

I now propose, with the aid partly of George Downing's Manuscript Journal and mainly of the *Thurloe State Papers*, to open a window which looks straight into 1658. When we have watched the world from January to December in that year, I hope the reader will realize one thing : that State Papers are by no means as dull as he may have been led to imagine. We are to understand that the new Ambassador goes to the Hague with a handsome salary, no less than £1,300 a year—a sum equal to at least £9,000 to-day, if not more.[2]

From George Downing's Journal.[3]

"$165\frac{7}{8}$

January 2. old stile — Saturday the 2d of January $165\frac{7}{8}$ from London in a barge I went downe to Gravesend, thence aboard the Newcastle frigat a vessel of 700 tun and 44 guns commanded by Captaine Curtis then rideing in the Hope (my goods, servants and coach horses being in vessel of 100 tun called the Dort of Dort) ; there wayting for a wind till
6 wensday the 6th wee fell downe with the tide as low as
9 Quinboro' where I went ashore saturday the 9th staying there till monday morning, when the winde comeinge about to the South-West wee set sayle in the sayd Frigat about 10
11 of clock the same morning and by 3 that afternoone wee

[1] For the primary object of his mission see Appendix A, his speech to the States General on his arrival, which I have copied from his MS. Journal. For the other two objects see Thurloe, VI, 676.

[2] *Cal. State Papers Dom.*, Dec. 18, 1657, p. 222.

[3] See Introduction, pp. 12 and 15.

were over the Flats with the sayd Dutch vessel or Buoyer; the night following, wee made little or no sayle for the most part, till day the 12th being tewsday about 11 of clock wee were in sight of the Brill, and at one of clock within two English miles of the Buoy which lyes at the mouth of the Maes upon a barre where there is not above 12 foot water, and the frigat drawing 15 I went aboard the Buoyer which no sooner over the Buoy and out of danger of pirats, shot off one gun as a signall: whereupon the Frigat bore up for the Downes and I up the Maes for Roterdam; but the Ice hindring I landed about 3 of clock that aforenoone at Maes-land-sluys: the same night I was visited by the Burgomeister and Ministers of the towne.

"Next morning wensday 13th I dispatcht a letter to the Hague for my Ld Nieupoort late Ambassador in England, and another to the States Generall as followeth."

Here follows a little Latin letter to the "High and Mighty Lords"—Celsi Præpotentesq: Domini—simply saying that his most clement lord the Protector had sent him to them as Ambassador, and that he had arrived. He ends, "Dominationum vestrarum servus humillimus. G. Downing."

The Journal continues:

"January new stile 23 Wensday the same $\frac{13}{23}$ I dined with the Burgomeister and Ministers of Maesland sluys and that night I received the States answer as followeth:"

Their Lordships make their reply, of course, in Latin, addressing Downing as "Nobilissime et Magnifice Domine." They are delighted to hear of his arrival as Resident with them from his most serene Lord the Protector. They wish to say how agreeable his presence will be to them, and they commend him to God. Downing notes down that the letter is superscribed "Nobilissimo et Magnifico Domino Downing Serenissimæ Reip: Angliæ Scotiæ et Hiberniæ Domini Protectoris ad statum confæderati Belgii: Residenti." The Journal continues:

24 Next day Thursday the $\frac{14}{24}$ having sent away my goods in 13 wagons I went in my owne Coach towards Delft, being met by the way by Yonker Nieuport on horseback who conducted me to my Inne at Delft where next morning his father the sayd
25 Lord Nieuport receiving me in his Coach wee arrived at the Hague, and there lodged in the house of Monsieur Maes the publicke lodging for all foreigne Ambassadours at their first arrival.
28 Munday following after Audience demanded I was conducted by the Agent de Hide into the Assembly of the States Generall between 11 and 12 of clock the ordinary time, and that afternoone to another Audience of the States of Holland, the manner of both which are expressed at large in the respective answers of the States aforesayd.

It is not necessary to listen to the brief, very friendly though entirely non-committal reply which the States General made to the lengthy and important speech of the new Ambassador.[1] But it is worthy of note that Downing was conveyed to the Assembly of the States General "en Carosse à quatre chevaux," received at the head of the stairs "par les Srs de Bootsma et vander Beecke," conducted by them into the Assembly, and seated "sur une grande chaise à bras couverte de drap."[2]

These formalities completed, the new Ambassador set to work, and his Journal is filled with copies of his memorials to the States General and their replies—now about mediating between Denmark and Sweden, now about mediating between the United Provinces and Portugal, now about English merchant ships captured by the Dutch, or Dutch merchant ships captured by the English, and other matters.

So far as the project of mediation between Sweden and Denmark was concerned, the Ambassador, after a series of masterly memorials to the States General, soon found himself very satisfactorily relieved of further anxiety. While "their High Mightinesses"—such was their

[1] See Appendix A.

[2] Downing's MS. Journal, f. 7. The extracts from the Journal which precede are from the first two pages.

magnificent designation—were cautiously wondering how they might best promote peace in the interest of their Danish Allies, Charles X of Sweden made mediation needless.

When Downing was dispatched to the Hague, the King of Sweden appeared to be losing the war against Denmark and her Allies, and Cromwell was gravely alarmed. Then between the 30th of January and the middle of February,[1] 1657-8, he performed those astounding exploits which are among the transient gleams of high romance in the dark history of war. He marched his army first from Jutland across the ice to the island of Funen, which was instantly conquered ; then, undeterred by the fact that two squadrons of Horse had been swallowed up, as well as his own carriages and those of the French Ambassador in the ice exploit of the Little Belt, he marched his army across the Great Belt by way of the islands, took one after another of them, finally Zeeland, and upon the 15th February was within a mile and a half of Copenhagen. On the 27th of February the King of Denmark was forced to sign the Peace of Roeskilde, which in effect made Sweden master of the Sound and of the Western Baltic.

George Downing notes in his Journal[2] that news of the Funen exploit reached the Hague on February 16, N.S. (i.e. Feb. 6, O.S.).

1658 February 16. "This day came newes by the Hamborough post that the King of Sweden with about five thousand men by the helpe of the Ice had passed into Funen and taken the same Iland with 8 ships of warre belonging to the King of Denmark, and taken Golden lion the Bastard brother of the sayd King prisoner wth many of the Danes, also that the Swedes in Riga had beaten the Poles which lay before that towne, and was also confirmed the newes of the taking Prisoner Heister who commanded in chiefe the forces of the King of Hungary which were to have entered into Pomerania."

[1] Old style.

[2] Downing's Journal, f. 23.

It must, therefore, have been with peculiar pleasure that the Ambassador penned his memorial of the 5th March, N.S.,[1] which, while exhorting the Dutch to make up their minds about sincere mediation for a separate peace between Denmark and Sweden in the interests of Protestantism, of Denmark and of themselves, referred in diplomatic terms to the melancholy condition of their ally, Denmark, and hinted that Sweden might turn its victorious arms against the United Provinces. News had not yet reached the Hague of the further ice exploits of the King of Sweden: hence Downing's memorial. But on the 17th March, N.S. (7th March, O.S.), news of the Peace of Roeskilde is noted by Downing in his Journal as having arrived by "the Hamborough Post"[2] Following on the news of Funen, Downing had already written to Lockhart, his Ambassador colleague at Paris, observing sardonically: "I need not tell you how this news is relished in these parts. Indeed, nothing could have happened more against the hair."[3] After Roeskilde the "affairs of the North" were relatively quiescent till the autumn.

But Sweden and Denmark were not the only eddies in the diplomatic maelstrom at this time, as has been already emphasized. Though the Ambassador did not confide the really interesting incidents of his career to his Journal, which mainly consists of memorials, these incidents can, nevertheless, be traced in the massive folio volumes of the *Thurloe State Papers*. Through the very numerous and lengthy letters there printed, with occasional reference to other sources, let us watch the Ambassador at work.

From these letters—which passed between Downing and Secretary Thurloe—I have constructed for the reader a sort of journal, specially noting the domestic and familiar details as being, in their way, quite as important, and often more interesting than high politics and diplomacy. In this

[1] This memorial is printed in the *Thurloe State Papers*, VI, 818–19, without date, but the MS. Journal, ff. 25–8, now supplies it.

[2] Downing's Journal, f. 30.

[3] Thurloe, VI, 792.

way it will be possible to follow various threads ; to observe the involved and vivid world at the Hague as it really was, at least in some of its aspects, in 1658 ; above all, to understand the character and ability of the Ambassador.

1658
March 10, N.S.

De Witt tells Downing that an English gentleman had come to him, apparently to communicate some great thing on behalf of Charles Stuart, that " the sweate runne downe his face, yet at length went away without imparting it to him." Downing thinks there may be a Royalist invasion of England in the near future. There are suspicious-looking ships being fitted out from Dutch ports. He suggests that some English warships should be sent " to ply before Ostend." [1]

Turning now, for a moment, to Downing's manuscript Journal, and examining the memorials which passed between him and the States General about these suspicious ships, we shall at once see, beneath the veneer of peace and diplomacy, how essentially hostile the two nations were at heart.

On March 9, Downing protested to the States General that one Michel van Diest of Rotterdam was sending ships, munitions, and sailors to Ostend for the service of the King of Spain.[2] On the 10th the States General replied saying that they are asking the deputies of the Council of Holland to acquaint the Magistrates of Rotterdam " concerning the fact." The Admiralty of Rotterdam are also being asked to enquire.[3] Two days later, by accident or design, Admiral Goodson's frigates met five of Van Diest's ships creeping along the coast towards Ostend. They captured three and ran two aground.[4]

On March 16 Downing sends a similar memorial about the proceedings of one Captain Tysen at Amsterdam, also supplying ships, munitions, and sailors for the

[1] Thurloe, VI, 835.
[2] Journal, f. 28.
[3] Id., f. 29.
[4] Id., ff. 29–30.

service of Spain. He hears that the Authorities of Amsterdam have very properly arrested Tysen, and trusts that proceedings will be taken against him as a violator of the Treaty of Peace of 1654 between the United Provinces and England.[1] On March 27 the States General informed Downing that the Van Diest affair is being made the subject of a most thorough enquiry, with special reference to the capture of the three ships by English frigates.[2] Meanwhile in the Tysen affair, they replied on March 22 asking the States of Holland to ask the Magistrates of Amsterdam to proceed against Tysen.[3]

On March 29, Downing gets impatient, as he hears Tysen has been released: he cannot credit it.[4] On April 2 the Dutch reply repeating the circumlocution of March 22.[5] Then on April 8 the States General say that the affair Tysen had been most carefully gone into, he was a Flemish captain and he had certainly been proceeding as Downing said. The Magistrates of Amsterdam had therefore banished and fined him (lad^e Cap^ne a esté sententié banni et condamné à une amende). Their High Mightinesses (Hautes Puissances) hope this answer to his memorials will be entirely satisfactory to the Sieur Resident Downing.[6] Hardly had this absurdly unsatisfactory reply reached Downing, for banishment of a Captain Tysen was simply tantamount to setting him at liberty to carry on his activities elsewhere, than a stiff note was sent to him (April 11) from their High Mightinesses, saying that the Van Diest enquiry had been completed, that the ships were merely going to Ostend innocently and demanding immediate restitution.[7] It is unnecessary to pursue this aspect of English and Dutch relations further at the moment; it will re-emerge hereafter.

[1] Journal, f. 30. [2] Id., ff. 34–6. [3] Id., ff. 33–4.
[4] Id., f. 41. [5] Id., f. 48.

[6] Id., ff. 49–50. A translation of this document is in Thurloe, VII, 29–30.

[7] Id., ff. 52–3. The dates of the replies of the States General in each case are those on which they were handed to Downing.

1658
March 17, N.S.

After reporting the news of the peace between Sweden and Denmark which had just reached the Hague, and referring to the troubles over the suspicious ships, Downing pleads that his servant Woodroffe, who "speaks French, and writes exceeding well and fast, and is most faithful to me," an old soldier, may be "continued in the musters" (i.e. kept on the regimental roll, and so continue to draw his pay presumably). He is indispensable to Downing.[1] Thurloe replies saying he will do his best for Woodroffe in the matter of the musters. He highly commends Downing for sending "Expresses." Downing had thought the Secretary might be annoyed with him on account of the extra expense of "expressed" dispatches.[2]

1658
March 30, N.S.

Downing presses Thurloe to facilitate the export of some English horses for the distinguished Dutch Admiral Opdam, as also for the Rhynegrave Governor of Maestricht —five geldings each. "I have, since my comeing hither, found very much civility from Opdam. Presently after my coming hither, he was one of the first came to visit [me], and is a person of great worth."[3]

In Thurloe's answers to Downing at this time he suggests that the Ambassador should go slow in the matter of mediation between Portugal and the Dutch till the latter's schemings in the affairs of the North are better known. They "do nothing but countenance and encourage the interest of the house of Austria in all places; and till they change their counsells in that, matters of trade cannot come into consideration." Again, "the answer they—[the States General]—gave you about Tysen is a very slovingly one, and makes it an impossible thing for any state, with whom they were in amity, to expect performance of any treaty from them." He urges Downing

[1] Thurloe, VI, 851–3. [2] Id., VI, 872–3. [3] Id., VII, 15.

to develop a secret intelligence service—" a considerable correspondence in Flanders both with the Spaniards and Charles Stuart. . . . I would give some 1,000 l. soe that it were neare and intimate." [1]

1658
May 17, N.S.

Downing has caused the Dukes of York and Gloucester to leave the Hague where they had come to stay for a short time, apparently with their sister, the Princess Royal of Orange.[2] He has started his secret service for Thurloe in Flanders. For himself, he is rather hard up ; undoubtedly the Ambassador's character was acquisitive in money matters :

" It shall be my endeavour to serve his highnesse and yourselfe, so far as in me lyes, and for my expenses it's as I then wrote ; and indeed my wife herself knows not what I have spent since my coming hither, I having returned hither moneys of my owne which she knowes not of, nor think I it fitt to let her know. I am contented, and 1,100 l. per annum [£1,300, see p. 84] is an honourable mayntenance. I am quite out of money ; and am, Honourable Sir, your very humble faithful servant, G. Downing." [3]

In a later letter he asks that he may have his money monthly, a regular arrangement for transmission being made " that I may not be so troublesome to you in my letters hereafter." [4]

The truth was that Cromwell's government was in grave financial straits at this time, and probably Downing's plea was perfectly justified ; nevertheless, whoever went unpaid it would not be George Downing !

Downing's vigilance in the matter of Royalist movements, and the zeal with which he insisted that the

[1] Thurloe, VII, 31–2, 49–50, 62–3. I have extracted from several of Thurloe's letters here and linked up the relevant points.

[2] Id., VII, 119–21, and Downing's MS. Journal, f. 76. Resolution of the States of Holland and Westfriesland, May 9, 1658.

[3] Id., VII, 119–21. [4] Id., VII, 130–2.

Royal dukes and Charles Stuart himself should not be allowed any stay in the United Provinces,[1] made him particularly odious to the Cavalier party. How odious is brought out in a fascinating letter from the Hague, dated March 30, 1658, addressed by one John Lane to Sir Edward Nicholas :

"Both the Dukes are here. They came on Tuesday, with the Earl of Norwich, Mr. Jermyn, and Mr. Trethewy. They were yesterday with their sister all over the fair, and in the dancing of the ropes, and to-day they dine at Ryswick, entertained by Laleeck, and others of our Dutch gentry. Downing has complained of their being here. He is a fearful gentleman. The day after the Princess came to town he set 2 of his footmen to stand sentry the whole day, one on the top of the stairs before the door, the other at the corner of the house, to watch the back gate, but there have been none since. He has hired another house. I hope the next remove of him and the rest of his comrades will be to the gallows, where they may have their due reward. . . ."[2]

Downing certainly was "a fearful gentleman" from the standpoint of those whose interests he regarded as hostile to the government he served. For the truth was that he was eminently efficient. And the more the Royalists,[3] or the Dutch, or foreign ambassadors with whom he had to deal, disliked him, the more evident does his efficiency appear ; for they realized that he was one whose restless and searching eye looked quite through the deeds of men, who never relaxed his efforts, and who was ruthless in carrying out those ends which he regarded as essential in the interest of his masters. And it is, in reality, greatly to the credit of Charles II that, despite the very good reasons he had for disliking Downing, he did not decline his overtures when the time came. For he rightly per-

[1] In accordance with the terms of the Peace of 1654.

[2] *Cal. State Papers Dom.*, 1657–8, pp. 349–50.

[3] "Who certainly is as arrant a rascal as lives amongst men," so another Royalist correspondent described Downing to Hyde in a letter dated Dec. 16, 1659. *Clarendon State Papers*, III, 630.

ceived—as Cromwell had perceived—that Downing was a person who possessed extraordinary faculties.

1658
June 20, N.S.

Downing reports to Thurloe the secret financial assistance being given by the Dutch to the King of Spain. They are profoundly nervous about the siege of Dunkirk by the English and French forces. He has engaged one Colonel Palmer as a spy on Royalist movements. He is sending Thurloe four dozen bottles of "Spaw water . . . the bottles were all sealed at the Spaw." Thurloe can have some more if he likes. He has just heard that Charles Stuart has had a meeting with his sister at Sevenberge "about seven o'clocke at night," and that they are still there, though "this place is certainly within the power of this state." In a later letter Downing tells Thurloe that his protest to de Witt in this matter caused Charles Stuart to leave Sevenberge "a little sooner than he intended."[1]

June 28, N.S.

Sir John Marlow—an important refugee Royalist who is ready to betray Royalist designs to Thurloe for £100—won't act as a spy, but will only enter Thurloe's service regularly, thus abandoning the Royalists altogether. Downing implores Thurloe to send a man-of-war to convoy English merchantmen waiting at the Brill laden with corn. Unless more convoys are available, the Dutch will get all the carrying trade, and England will want for seamen, "for trading and seamen are gotten and lost by degrees."[2]

1658
June 25, O.S.

Thurloe asks Downing for another 100 bottles of Spaw water. "For Sir John Marlow, the question is, whether we must trust him, or he us. . . . If he will first make

[1] Thurloe, VII, 166–9 and 233–4.
[2] Id., VII, 149–50 and 181–2.

this discovery, he shall have a 100 l. and more, and a passe if it deserve it." Thurloe has only received one letter this week from the spies : perhaps they are addressing their letters wrong : alternative addresses are "Mr. Adrian Peters at the Bell & Tun in Southwarke ; Mr. Joseph Miller at the Sugar-Loafe in Tems-street." He will see to the convoy of shipping.[1]

1658
July 4, N.S.

Downing reports that the capture of Dunkirk has caused extraordinary alarm among the Dutch : they don't at all like the English so near them on the Continent. Then follows a passage which, in a moment, illustrates the immense reputation of Cromwell in Europe :

"The French ambassador hath earnestly desired of me a picture of his highness, and that he will take it as a very noble favour from his highness. If you had one from Cooper [the miniature-painter] for Beverning [the Dutch diplomatist and politician, cousin of de Witt], another also might be had for him. Truly it's worth the cost, which is little. He is a person of great quality, Comt de Thou, allyed to the best families in France. I pray that it might come with Beverning ; he would have me promise it, which I have done."

In a later letter Downing suggests that if Cromwell can't sit for both portraits, a copy might be done by Cooper or some other very good hand."[2]

1658
July 12, N.S.

Downing has obtained an order from the Council of State stopping the English Ministers at the Hague from praying for Charles Stuart. He urges Thurloe to consider settling a Minister at the Hague with a regular salary, to preach constantly in Dutch. "Indeed I have

[1] Thurloe, VII, 202–3. There are very numerous letters from spies in Flanders to Thurloe in this volume of the *Thurloe State Papers*, showing how effectively Downing had arranged for this service.

[2] Id., VII, 227–30 and 296.

stirred in this businesse to my very utmost for that this way of praying, with its dependencies, made this place a meere nursery of Cavallierisme." In a later letter (July 21) Downing says that Mr. Beaumont (the English Minister) now never prays for Charles Stuart in the English Church, but prays for England's welfare, and " in such a manner, as to insinuate something also in generall prayer for his highness."[1]

July 18, N.S.

In this letter Downing deals with a point to which both de Witt and he attached much importance . . .

" de Witt spoke to me this weeke about the title, (*Dominationum*) which his highness gives them in the subscription of his letter, which I lately gave them. I told them, it was the same that he had given them in all other letters, which I had tendered to them. He saith it should be *celsitudinum.* At the beginning is *Celsi et potentes domini.* I told him I would give an accompt of what he said, and shall also give you an accompt, how the King of France his letters are. You may heerin see their pride."

In a later letter Downing says he cannot think it fit for Cromwell to call the States General *Celsitudines.* He himself only gives them *Seignieuries* in French and *Lordships* in English " and in all the letters I have yet received from his highness, he hath only styled them *dominationum.*"

The Royalist traitor, Sir John Marlow, is willing to see Downing, but simply cannot leave his lodging without money, as his landlady will not let him, and he cannot leave his wife and children " to be affronted and abused." Sir John wants £40 first to pay his landlady. Downing thinks he may have important information. Later he tells Thurloe that Sir John has accepted 1,000 guilders and is sailing for England to report to Thurloe. Marlow knows all the North Country inside out, and all the plotters there. He tells Downing that " the designe [a Royalist rising] goes on amain against next winter." In a later letter still

[1] Thurloe, VII, 245–6 and 257–8, also 227–30.

(August 23) Downing reports what "a great startle in Charles Stuart's court" Sir John's defection had caused.[1]

About this time there were one or two attempts to assassinate Downing: one, Major Whitefield or Whitford "that killed Dr. Dorislaus,"[2] was lurking about, but is warned off. In this connection it is worth noting that directly Downing arrived at the Hague the Dutch Government took special measures for his protection. This is clear from his MS. Journal which contains a resolution of the States of Holland and Friesland providing expressly that every possible step, through the deputies of the Council, the President and Councillor of the Court of Justice, and the Grand Pensionary himself, shall be taken for Downing's personal safety and that of his suite. For the Assembly of "their very noble Mightinesses" of Holland and Friesland had "fait reflexion sur les desordres precedentes qui ont esté faits aux autres Ministres de lad^te^ Republique au grand regret de leurs tres nobles puissances."[3]

Another and slightly earlier attempt is described by Downing with sardonic humour in a letter to Thurloe which is undated, but which from internal evidence would appear to have been written late in July or early in August.

"I perceive, there hath bin a report at London, that I was stab'd; and I finde it very often true, that when the cavileeres give out any newes as done, that they have at that time some designe for the doeing it; and this is true, that upon tuesday night last 3 Englishmen about ten of the clock at night, with their haire tucked up under white caps, stood privatly at a bridg neare my house; and a Dutch gentleman going out, my dore was noe sooner shut, but they took him by the collar, saying, *Bougre Englishman*, what did you there? But finding him to be a Dutchman, they lett him goe; and the gentleman the next day lett me know what had befallen him, whereof I have given an accompt to Mons. de Witt. Indeede they are very angry at mee, for that I have by little and little extreamly disturbed and spoyled their kingdome here; and exceeding angry they are at this last

[1] Thurloe, VII, 251–3, 270–2, 312–13, 330–4.
[2] Id., VII, 331–4.
[3] Downing's MS. Journal, f. 1.

action of mine, in obteyning, that Charles Stuart should be noe more prayed for heere ; . . ." [1]

All this time Downing had, with the utmost energy, been protesting to the States General against piratical attacks on English Merchantmen by freebooters from Flanders, who brought their prizes into Dutch ports and there sold them. Between April 5 and October 2 I find from his Journal that he presented no less than ten Memorials on this subject which received polite replies by way of resolution from the States General, but little remedy. In one extra-European case, however, the Dutch with great reluctance promised restitution. This was the case of three ships, the *Postilion*, the *Frederick* and the *Francis & John*, which had been taken by the Dutch East India Company at Bantam on the ground that they were assisting the Natives—enemies of the Dutch. Cromwell himself intervened in this case, sending a special Latin letter on the subject to the States General.[2]

Whether it was due to Cromwell's personal intervention, or to the fact that some Dutch ships coming from Cadiz had recently been taken by English war-ships and were now released (Downing expressly calling attention to this conciliatory action in his Memorial to the States General of July 23),[3] the Dutch early in August promised restitution. Downing said that he and de Witt nearly came to blows over the affair, the Dutch East India Company declaring " that it were much better to have a warre with England than to restore these ships." [4] Even so the Dutch East India Company—whose superb title of address was *Honourables Magnanimes Sages Prudents et très Discrets* [5] —delayed restitution for another six months, as will be seen hereafter.

As August drew to its close reports of Cromwell's serious

[1] Thurloe, VII, 270–2.
[2] Downing's MS. Journal, July 13, 1658, ff. 96–7.
[3] Id., ff. 99–100.
[4] Thurloe, VII, 296.
[5] Downing's MS. Journal, ff. 69–70.

illness reached the Hague, and greatly alarmed Downing :

" I hope both he and you will thinke of his children " ; he wrote to Secretary Thurloe on August 19th, " I mean England, Scotland, and Ireland, what they shall do, if it shold please God to take him away : to leave them in civil warres after his death would be very sad ; and more sad, seeing in an ordinary way it may be prevented ; and indeed all the other councils are but little ones to this." [1]

When Downing wrote this letter there were hopes of Cromwell's recovery, and the Ambassador at the Hague while urging Thurloe to prepare for the worst as a matter of mere prudence, was relieved to hear that " his highnesse is on the mending hand."

But Cromwell was worn out. During the period of his supremacy he had borne upon his shoulders a greater burden of government than has, perhaps, ever been borne by any great ruler of men, or any statesman, in the history of the world. The whole circumstances of the time were such that he had himself to carry this burden or be overwhelmed. And always behind him was the inevitable shadow, that all his labours might be in vain, and the Revolution end in the Restoration.

Now that his hour had come he did not repine : rather he hastened to meet it. There are no words more characteristic of his spirit, or more instinct with greatness than those dying words to the doctor, who was urging him to drink something, and then to sleep : " It is not my design to drink or to sleep, but my design is to make what haste I can to be gone."

The effect of Cromwell's death upon those of his contemporaries who both understood his greatness, and revered him, is wonderfully expressed by Secretary Thurloe in a letter of his to Downing which is to be found among the latter's papers in the British Museum, and which is here printed for the first time. Thurloe's letter was written within twenty-four hours of the death of his master, and, as will be seen, under the stress of great emotion :

[1] Thurloe, VII, 344–9.

Sir 4 Sept. 1658.

I pray excuse me, if I doe wth some distraction acquaint you wth the saddest newes wch ever came out of England, to witt the death of my Lord Protector, whom God took to himselfe upon Friday at 3 quarters of an houre past 3 of the clocke in the afternoone, to the unexpressible griefe of all good men in these Nations, who had beene for a fortnight together prayinge for his life, uncessantly. He hath died more lamented than any man hath done in this or ye generations past. His name is and will be precious to all generations, and is now even to those who murmured at him in his life tyme. Only the providence of God in takinge away at this season is stupendious,[1] and nothinge can be sayd to it, but in silence to put our mouth [2] in the dust, and to say that [God] is good, and all his workes (though strange to us,) and knowne to him from the beginninge. In the midst of that sad perplexitie and overwhelminge sorrow, we have this comfort, that my lord Richard, whom his father appointed successor, is come peaceablye to the Government, and with the unanimous consent of the Counsell and Army ; my Lord Fleetwood, and Desboro profess (and I believe them) all fidelity to him, and that they will stick by him, and the truth is all the officers even those who might be most doubted are very heartily for him. He was proclaymed yesterday in London, as you will see by the enclosed proclamation. You will have new credentialls and Instructions by the post wch I stopt on Friday night untill I could send an Account at length. I must break of now and rest,

Your very affectionate and faithfull servant,

Jo. Thurloe.[3]

For the hono^ble^ George Downinge Esqr
English Resident at the Hague. These.

[1] For this spelling of "stupendious," cf. Milton, *Paradise Lost*, Bk. X, ls. 350–1.

"Great joy was at their meeting, and at sight
Of that stupendious bridge his joy increased."

[2] Secretary Thurloe has evidently been reading Lamentations, ch. 3, ver. 29.

[3] *B.M. Add. MSS.* 22,919, f. 44. The letter of the same date which Thurloe wrote to Henry Cromwell (*Thurloe State Papers*, VII, 372–3) contains one or two similar phrases, but, as written to the Protector's son it is, perhaps inevitably, less natural, and is certainly less distinguished and attractive as a letter. The difference in the two letters as to the time at which Cromwell died is worth noting: in the letter to Henry Cromwell Thurloe says "about four of the clocke in the afternoone."

CHAPTER SIX

III. FROM THE DEATH OF CROMWELL TO THE RESTORATION

Drown'd be past sorrows, with our future care,
For (if we know how blest we are)
A knowing Prince at last is wafted home,
That can prevent, as overcome.
Make then our injuries, and harms to be
The Chorus to our jollity,
And from those iron times, past woe's recall,
Extract one Mirth to balance all.

—*From* CHARLES COTTON'S *To Mr. Alexander Brome: Epode.*

FOR eight months following the death of Cromwell his son Richard reigned peacefully in his stead. But though he was neither weak nor foolish—on the contrary, he was a person of more than ordinary strength of mind and ability—he could not do that which it had required both a giant and a genius to do, keep down the forces of anarchy inherent in the Puritan Revolution.

The sons of great men, unless—as in the case of the younger Pitt—they inherit the full stature of their fathers, are apt to be dismissed by Posterity either with contempt, or with contemptuous tolerance. Such a gesture is, however, wholly unjust, and particularly so in the case of Richard Cromwell. For quite apart from certain positive acts of wisdom—his spirited intervention, for instance, in the affairs of the North to be immediately considered—he deserves the gratitude of men for his peaceful abdication of power early in May, 1659. For power contains also a certain poison which has a marvellous capacity of pervert-

ing men's judgment of themselves. They quickly become convinced of their own indispensability, and it requires either the sword—in ancestral days—or the ballot box in more modern times, to shatter the illusion. Therefore Richard Cromwell's declaration " I will not have one drop of blood spilt for the preservation of my greatness " is memorable, and invests his character with a certain melancholy grandeur.

Meanwhile at the Hague things went on very much as before, and Downing continued to represent Richard as he had represented Oliver. The question of mourning caused him some anxiety—the formalities connected therewith being of infinitely greater moment then than now. He writes to Thurloe on September 20, 1658, " I will be, as to mourning, as good a husband as possibly I can " ; on September 28 he emphasizes how punctilious the Dutch are about these things, and how he has had to put himself and all his family and coaches, and an apartment of his house into mourning—" I have endeavoured to buy the mourning as cheap as possibly I could " ; again on October 11 " for my life I could not have been a better husband." [1]

But more serious matters were now to engage the Ambassador's attention. The affairs of the North had flared up again, some weeks indeed before the death of Cromwell, and Downing's Journal between August 25 and September 1 (N.S.) briefly records the arrival of the news of Charles X's suddenly renewed war against Denmark, and the resolution of the States General to stand by the latter " according to their Treaty." [2] On October 1 he enters : " This day came certaine Newes that the Swedes had taken by capitulation the Castle of Cronenburg in Zeland and with it 1,000 barrels of pouder and 100 brasse Cannon etc." [3]

It will make it easier to follow Downing's activities at the Hague, in endeavouring to render effective Richard

[1] Thurloe, VII, 379–80, 390, 417–20.
[2] Downing's MS. Journal, ff. 134–6.
[3] Id., f. 149.

Cromwell's mediation between Sweden and Denmark, if the reader keeps in mind the following salient dates.

August, 1658. Charles X resumes war with Denmark, apparently on the ground that Denmark—under Dutch instigation—was not fulfilling completely all the terms of the Peace of Roskilde. He besieges Copenhagen.

October–November, 1658. The Dutch Fleet under Admiral Opdam enters the Sound, and though suffering great loss defeats the Swedish Fleet (Nov. 8) and relieves Copenhagen. Meanwhile—in September—Sweden's other enemies, Poles, Austrians and Brandenburgers, had been victorious over Swedish forces elsewhere—in Prussia and Holstein.

November to December, 1658. Richard Cromwell's proposal of mediation, backed up by the temporary dispatch of a British Fleet to the Sound.

February, 1659. Charles X again attacks Copenhagen but is repulsed.

April–May, 1659. The British Fleet under Admiral Montagu enters the Sound. Fall of Richard Cromwell and restoration of the Rump.

May $\frac{11}{21}$, 1659. The First Concert of the Hague is signed whereby England, France and the United Provinces agree to mediate between Sweden and Denmark, and to guarantee the peace.

July–August, 1659. Second and Third Hague Concerts (France standing out) whereby England and the United Provinces agree to use force against whichever King—Sweden or Denmark—declines to make peace.

August 26, 1659. Admiral Montagu withdraws the British Fleet, hoping to participate decisively on behalf of Charles Stewart in the rising then contemplated in England. This was Booth's rising, but it was crushed by Lambert. Meanwhile, though Montagu did not reveal why he had withdrawn the Fleet, his

command was temporarily taken from him. The Dutch Fleet under de Ruyter remains.

November, 1659. The Swedes are overwhelmed at Nyborg in Funen by the combined arms of the Dutch, Danes, Poles and Austrians.

February, 1660. Death of Charles X of Sweden.

May 3, 1660. Peace of Oliva between Sweden, Poland, the Emperor, and Brandenburg. Sweden retains Livonia, Brandenburg Prussia. Denmark, thus deserted by these Allies, is compelled to make peace.

May 27, 1660. Peace of Copenhagen between Sweden and Denmark, based mainly on the Peace of Roskilde, except that the Sound is not to be closed (as in the Roskilde Treaty) to foreign fleets : this concession was of primary importance to the Dutch, who throughout had fought for free entry into the Baltic.[1]

I have brought this phase of the story of the North down to May, 1660, for the sake of completeness, though, in fact, England ceased to exercise any really controlling influence once Admiral Montagu had withdrawn the British Fleet. Moreover, Downing's main work ended with the first Hague Concert.

We will now, as rapidly as possible, disentangle the main thread of Richard Cromwell's mediation for a separate peace between Sweden and Denmark. In this attempted mediation there was, of course, nothing new, as Oliver had pursued it through Downing early in 1658, until the Peace of Roskilde made further efforts needless for the time. What was new was the vigour with which England acted in sending the Fleet into the Sound in November and April, with the tacit object of seeing that Sweden was not crushed by the Dutch intervention.

On November $\frac{16}{26}$ Secretary Thurloe wrote to Downing referring to " his Highnesses " instructions (not preserved

[1] See R. Nisbet Bain's *Scandinavia*, pp. 253–5, and G. Edmundson's *History of Holland*, ch. xv, both books published by the Cambridge University Press. See also *D.N.B.*, " Edward Montagu, 1st Earl of Sandwich."

in Downing's official correspondence) for promoting a separate peace between Sweden and Denmark. It concerns us, says Thurloe, in this conjuncture of affairs to keep Sweden up "being a very considerable ally."[1] On November 30, Downing presents to the States General Richard Cromwell's proposal for mediation for a separate peace between Sweden and Denmark "without intermingling of any other interest or matter whatsoever."[2] This condition must be remembered as it was an essential part of the British proposal—the Dutch, on the other hand, were always endeavouring to bring in also the other Allies of Denmark —particularly Brandenburg and Poland.

On $\frac{2}{2}\frac{2}{2}$ November/December, 1658, Downing wrote to Thurloe describing very vividly how he had pressed home his instructions. He had induced the French Ambassador to promise also to present a memorial proposing mediation, though the latter was exceedingly reluctant as he had not received positive instructions, and was diffident about the "separate peace" condition, for Poland had a French Queen. The French Ambassador spent a sleepless night beforehand, and at the last moment was going back on his promise, when that "fearful gentleman" Downing arrived at his house, and by vigorous importunity and argument induced the French Ambassador to keep his word. "I need not tell you," says Downing, "how much the States General were startled at those two unexpected thunderclaps [i.e. the two Memorials] coming together." De Witt has an interview with Downing, wriggles violently, wants to make peace on the conditions of 1645 which would be tantamount to wiping out all Sweden had gained at Roskilde.[3] Downing points out how absurd such an attitude is in view of Sweden's strategic position. Then he threw out a hint which must have made De Witt's blood

[1] *B.M. Add. MSS.*, 22,919, f. 61.

[2] Thurloe, VII, 520.

[3] The Dutch Historian Wicquefort confirms that the Dutch desired mediation on the basis of the 1645 peace. Wicquefort, *Histoire des Provinces Unies*, II, 559 and 575.

freeze in his veins. He called attention to the wintry weather, and the possibility of a repetition of those ice-exploits with which Charles X a year ago had electrified Europe. Downing sums up the attitude of the Dutch : " The truth is, they would give the law to all Europe, and not receive it from any, and have England, and France, and everybody else, steer after their compass ; and their North Pole is their traffic, measuring all things by that." In particular they desired to make themselves " absolute masters " of the Baltic sea.[1]

On December $\frac{3}{13}$, 1658, Downing was able to report that De Witt was more conciliatory. The Dutch were, indeed, alarmed by learning of the dispatch of the British Fleet to the Sound, and the mere news of it had caused them to keep back a force of 4,000 men they were about to embark to assist the Danes. De Witt, very reasonably, explained that it was difficult for the Dutch to accept the separate peace condition without qualification, as in so doing they would automatically make themselves odious to Brandenburg and Poland. De Witt, however, would move in that direction.[2] In a previous letter Downing says that the Dutch are furious with him for his memorial, and that the Ambassadors of Brandenburg and Poland had both been to solicit the amity of His Highness. He adds : " a great wondering at his Highness's fleet being gone [to the Sound], and what they will do there."[3]

The British Fleet did not remain long, as the Sound was frozen, which caused the Dutch very grave anxiety for their own fleet.[4]

Finally (December 12, N.S.) the Dutch decided to identify themselves with England and France in the matter of mediation, and to " send ministers extra-ordinary to the two Northern Kings."[5]

Thus Downing by his importunity with the French Ambassador which resulted in the " two unexpected thun-

[1] Thurloe, VII, 522–5. [2] Id., VII, 545–6. [3] Id., VII, 532–5.
[4] Id., VII, 556–7. [5] Id., VII, 543–4.

der-claps," by working on De Witt's natural nervousness about the frost which, in fact, shortly afterwards froze the Sound, and through the support afforded by the temporary dispatch of the British Fleet induced the Dutch to accept the principle of mediation on the basis of a separate peace between Denmark and Sweden.

From this date, the middle of December, 1658, till March, 1660, the *Thurloe State Papers*, except for a few stray references, entirely fail us, and we can only piece together the remaining history of the mediation from Downing's official papers.

From these we learn that on April 3, 1659 (O.S.), the draft terms on which mediation is to be settled—for acceptance of a principle is one thing in diplomacy, and its implementing by articles is another—are still being discussed between England and the United Provinces. The Fleet, however, under Montagu has already sailed for the Sound.[1]

On April 16 (O.S., i.e. 26 N.S.), 1659, Downing received an immensely long dispatch signed "Your loving Friend Richard P.,"[2] in effect soundly rating him for apparently having gone beyond his instructions in the matter of the draft articles of agreement. Neither the Protector nor "our principal Secretary of State" (Thurloe) can understand how he has permitted certain articles to be included. All the Protector wanted to do was "to agree the two Kings upon ye treatie of Roeskild without interweaving anie other interest." He is also quite ready to mediate between Sweden and her other enemies, but separately, and so as not to desert the King of Sweden if things do not come right. Now Downing has joined these proposals—which it was "our care" to keep distinct, together. At this point Downing breaks in with a marginal note in his rambling hand-writing: "It is expressly sett down that Poland and Brandenburg peace is not to hinder ye peace between Sweden and Denmarke." (This was true, as the final form of the Treaty makes clear.) Finally continues

[1] *B.M. Add. MSS.*, 22,919, f. 90.

[2] I.e. Protector.

the Protector, what use is the signature of the French Ambassador to these articles when he had no authority behind him, "if there were no other error in this Negotiation, it were sufficient to overthrow all ye rest." This was too much for Downing: he scrawls in the margin "this is such an error as wi^th^out wch I could never have done anything heer wch I had to do wth ye French Amb: his orders coming alwayes so late."[1]

It seems certain that Richard Cromwell and Secretary Thurloe writing, as they were, from Whitehall had failed to grasp all the complexities of the situation at the Hague. For their representative had not only to struggle with De Witt, one of the most eminently able of statesmen, but with all sorts of difficulties which they could not fully appreciate at a distance. How could De Witt in solemn formulas, or by brusque implication, disclaim all intention of doing anything for his own Allies? How could the appearance of a united front between England and France be maintained unless one hurried the French Ambassador into signing, even though his instructions had not arrived?

This, doubtless, would have been Downing's answer. In any case, it was clear that Richard Cromwell's main object was fulfilled. At last England, France and the United Provinces on the $\frac{11}{21}$ May signed the Concert of the Hague. This provided for mediation on the basis of the peace of Roskilde, subject to a modification of the Sound clause—insisted on by De Witt, so as to provide for free entry into the Baltic for foreign fleets.[2]

[1] *B.M. Add. MSS.* 22,919, ff. 91–2. I have merely attempted to pick out the gist of the dispatch covering two closely written folio pages written on both sides, i.e. really four folio pages, which criticizes the draft Treaty article by article—Downing "observing" in the margin.

[2] Pontalis suggests that De Witt is the real hero of the first Hague Convention: "Le Grand Pensionnaire prit habilement les devants pour leur [i.e. to England and France] proposer une médiation, et il la fit accepter, sous la condition que les États Généraux se joindraient aux deux puissances médiatrices contre celui des deux rois qui refuserait la paix. Les Négociations se prolongèrent pendant plus de deux mois, et aboutirent à la convention de la Haye."—*De Witt*, Tom. I, 254. But it is clear that Richard

The document of April $\frac{16}{26}$, 1659, was probably the last important State Paper on foreign affairs to be signed by the Protector Richard. For on April 22 he had been forced by the Army leaders to dissolve his Parliament—summoned in January.[1]

On May 7 the terrible Rump reassembled at Westminster, and on May 25 Richard formally submitted to the new Government, or rather Chaos, as a Royalist of the time described it. On May 27 Thurloe wrote from Whitehall saying that Parliament would ratify the Treaty Downing had made. He asks if Downing wishes to be continued at the Hague under the new Government. Finally will Downing send all the information he can about the intended Royalist rising (which was arranged for, took place, and failed in August), employing spies.[2]

The indefatigable Secretary of State was not, however, continued in his post by the hostile Republican Parliamentarians who now ruled England, with intervals of anarchy, till February 21, 1660. Not until the Rump had been virtually swamped by the admission of the secluded Members on that date was Thurloe restored to his post—on February 27.[3]

Downing was, however, continued in his appointment at the Hague,[4] though, for the reasons already explained,

Cromwell must be credited with the principle of mediation for a separate peace *based on Roskilde*, and that Downing induced the reluctant De Witt to come in on that principle. The seventh clause of the Concert provided that England and France would endeavour to mediate a peace between Sweden and the United Provinces, and that the three Powers together would similarly act as mediators between Sweden and Poland and Brandenburg, but that these endeavours should in no way hinder the negotiations for a separate peace between Sweden and Denmark. See Dumont, *Corps Diplomatique*, Vol. VI, Pt. II, 252–3.

[1] Downing seems to have retained confidence in the stability of Richard's Protectorship, and to have acted diplomatically with assurance and even assertion till as late as $\frac{17}{27}$ May, 1659. See *The Nicholas Papers*, Vol. IV, pp. 142–3, published by the Camden Society, 1920.

[2] *B.M. Add. MSS.* 22,919, f. 110.

[3] *D.N.B.*, Sir Charles Firth's notice of Thurloe.

[4] Whitelocke's *Memorials*, pp. 681 and 693.

we hear little of him. On August 4, 1659, he signed the further Hague Concert to which reference has already been made, and in November there is news of his returning to England "for the despatching of his own private affairs; as also to receive orders from the Government."[1]

The time was now approaching when George Downing would have to make a choice upon which his whole future depended. But before his secret reconciliation with Charles Stuart is considered, it will be necessary for the reader to turn backward with me, and unravel two threads. One of these threads is intertwined with George Downing's ambassadorial career and with great events after the Restoration; the other leads directly to Downing's personal "volte face" before the Restoration.

It will be remembered that Downing had been sent to the Hague by Cromwell with the primary object of preventing England and the United Provinces from drifting into war. The complication of the North has been explored; the trade complication—the commercial rivalry—has been traced to the summer of 1658. This complication must now be further pursued because it explains, incidentally, the Second Dutch War; it explains also George Downing's apparent ruthlessness as an Ambassador. One further complication—the war between Portugal and the Dutch in which Downing tried to act as Mediator—can be dismissed in very few words: not until August, 1661, was peace signed between Portugal and the United Provinces. Downing did his best, but it was impossible for him to succeed, for the plain fact was that it paid the Dutch to continue the War.[2] Moreover, after the death of Cromwell, or rather after the fall of Richard Cromwell eight months later, England was too occupied with internal troubles to intervene effectively in European affairs. As it was, the King of Portugal was not unmindful of Down-

[1] Thurloe, VII, 705, 775–6.

[2] "Meanwhile the Dutch captured Ceylon and Macassar and practically cut off Portuguese intercourse with the East Indies."—George Edmundson's *History of Holland*, p. 229. Cambridge University Press, 1922.

ing's efforts, and Downing's Journal contains the translation of a letter which he received from the King on July 4, 1658, warmly thanking him for his good offices.[1]

The mediation did, indeed, effect something, for it brought the Dutch into direct contact with a special Envoy from Portugal. An entry in Downing's Journal throws an amusing light on the interchange of Ambassadorial courtesies, and the immense importance of meals.

> 1658, July 22, N.S. "This day the Portugall Amb[r] Extraordinary had his first Audience, and after, he treated the States, who had treated him the 7 foregoing meales or 3 days and a halfe, besides 2 meales at Roterdam." [2]

As to commercial complications, there seemed to be no end to them. Downing's Journal—that part of it which I have managed to trace—concludes in October, 1658, but up to that date his Memorials are filled with remonstrances on behalf of English ships piratically captured, plundered and sold. Space forbids us to follow the forlorn fortunes of *Sussanah*, *Rachel*, *Content*, *Love and Friendship*, *Alexander*, *Rabbit*, *Increase*, *Fortune*, *Rebeccah*, *May*, or *Robbert*.[3]

Nevertheless, a few years later, their shadowy sails might doubtless have been seen signalling a ghostly blessing to the English fleets in the war of 1665–7.

The Dutch answered Downing's Memorials with promptitude and with courtesy, but, in effect, nothing happened. They would instruct the Admiralties of Amsterdam, or Zealand, or Rotterdam to make inquiries. They had issued a "Placart" against Piracies forbidding Pirates to enter their ports with prizes, and sell them there. They would take every possible step to capture one, Captain Bomber, a notorious pirate, and they expatiate upon what they will do when they have caught him. But Bomber was not caught; despite the "Placart" things went on

[1] Downing's MS. Journal, f. 94. [2] Id., f. 98.

[3] Id., ff. 52, 54, 56–7, 99–100, 115–18, 123–6, 136–7, 140, 142, 144, 150–1.

just as before ; the Admiralty of Zealand had diligently inquired, but could not find that any damage had been done to any English ship.[1]

Such were the answers which Downing received, and this is the explanation of his reiterated advice between 1661 and 1664 that the Dutch cared nothing for words, that Memorials and pious remonstrances were useless, and that deeds and resolution alone had weight.

And it is significant that, at this period at least, the fault seems to have lain mainly with the Dutch ; the English do not appear to have retaliated with vigour till after the Restoration. In Downing's Journal, which purports to contain all his Memorials and the Dutch replies thereto, and their independent resolutions on their own grievances between January and October, 1658, I can find relatively few Dutch remonstrances against English piracies. They protest about a ship called *La Paix* captured by Admiral Penn in the West Indies in 1655 ; against the action of an English Frigate in attacking a ship close to Rotterdam ; they ask for restitution of the Sugar ships coming from Cadiz (these, as we have seen, Cromwell restored) ; they vigorously object to English Frigates lurking outside Dutch ports on the pretext of intercepting Galician levies going to assist the Spaniards, and against the English claim to search ships for contraband ; they ask Downing to use his good offices with the King of France so that privateers with Portuguese Commissions should not be allowed to make use of French Ports—but they do not suggest that the Privateers are really English, and it seems unlikely, therefore, that they were.[2]

To Thurloe Downing freely communicated his views. Unless these piratical attacks by Flanders Pirates are stopped they will " in time be the ruine of all English shipping,"[3] he writes on October 15, 1658 ; a little later, only retaliation will do any good ; again : " Yea, if the mer-

[1] Downing's MS. Journal, ff. 51, 106, 123–6, 129–32, 146–8, 150–4.
[2] Id., ff. 55–6, 57–9, 91, 106–9, 133.
[3] Thurloe, VII, 421–2.

chants shipping of England be destroyed, though the trade of England should continue, yet being driven in forraine bottomes (which is the necessary consequence of the practice) England is undone ; and this is a thing so manifest that it needs not to be explained."[1] In this sentence Downing, with his extraordinary power of forceful and compendious statement, sums up the whole mercantile policy underlying the Navigation Acts, a policy, the object of which has been expounded by Economic Historians only within relatively recent years. For it was the doctrine of our ancestors of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries that in the end, and indeed also in the beginning, British Security depended upon the intrepid mariner, who voyaged to far countries in a merchantman of a hundred tons, and upon the fisherman who, day in and day out, patiently plied his obscure calling in pathless and tempestuous seas.

In the winter and spring of 1658–9 Downing was able to report some progress, and the fact is of great significance as showing that the government of Richard Cromwell was deeply respected and feared abroad. On December 10/20, 1658, he writes to Thurloe that he has succeeded in obtaining restitution of some English ships taken by Flanders pirates.[2] At last, too, satisfaction was about to be accorded by the Dutch East India Company for the Bantam ships.[3] In a letter from Thurloe to Downing of February 4 (O.S.), 1658–9, referring to a previous letter of Downing's, he urges the ambassador to endeavour to obtain immediate payment, as an improvement on the agreement to compensate the owners within ten weeks.[4] In an earlier letter of January 7, Thurloe had said " His Highness and the Counsell doe very much longe to know certainly what is to be expected from the Dutch in the East India buissines, *it beinge that which the eyes of all the Nation are upon*."[5]

[1] Thurloe, VII, 429–31, 469–70 (Oct. 31, 1658).
[2] Id., VII, 556–7.
[3] See p. 98.
[4] *B.M. Add. MSS.*, 22,919, f. 75.
[5] Id., 22,919, f. 72.

These last words (the italics are mine) are profoundly significant.

Upon February 18 (O.S.), 1658–9, Thurloe is still uneasy and dictates a dispatch by the hand of his Secretary, Andrew Marvell.

"... For it seems that in that order of the States there is indeed care taken for the three ships, the *Frederick*, *Postilion*, *Francis and John*, but, in the clause, at the end, all the other just pretenses of the Merchants for the *Endymion*, the *Bantam*, and many other damages sustained from the Hollanders in the East Indyes are precluded; which in no case aught to be done." [1]

Downing is urged to intervene further. Finally, on March 4 (O.S.), 1658–9, Secretary Thurloe writes that "His Highnesse has ratified ye Aggreem^t^ you have made about ye 3 East India ships." [2]

A year passes, and it would appear that things have dropped back into the old, bad way; advantage is being taken by the Dutch, says Downing to the restored Thurloe in a letter of March 16/26, 1660, of the domestic upheaval in England, to carry on their depredations on English shipping. Then referring to a projected "Placart against Piracies" being pressed for by the Dutch, he says:

"You know very well, that the great design of S.G. [States General] is by bonds, and treatys of any kinds, and under any pretext, to wrest from England its soverainty on the seas [i.e. the four English seas]; and when those treatys shall be made, instead of greater amity, there will be continual quarrels about non-execution." [3]

Here, for the time, the unwinding of this thread must cease; because it does not again intertwine itself with Downing's career until June, 1661. Then it will be resumed, and traced to the point to which many fatal threads in history have led—to war, the gate "with dreadful faces thronged and fiery arms."

[1] *B.M. Add. MSS.*, f. 81. [2] Id., f. 86.
[3] Thurloe, VII, 847–9, 849–50, and also 826–8 and 836–7.

The steps leading to Downing's reconciliation with Charles Stuart grimly reveal what the poet Cotton called "those iron times"; moreover, the efficiency with which the intrigue was conducted does credit to the competence, if not to the character, of him who had once been the head of Cromwell's Intelligence Staff in the field.

The story of the "old reverend-like man with a long beard and ordinary grey clothes," who, pulling off his beard and revealing his identity as Downing, with profound secrecy warned Charles Stuart when visiting his sister at the Hague, to leave instantly or he would be seized by the States General, and delivered over to Cromwell, may or may not be true. In Downing's MS. Journal,[1] opposite a memorial he presented to the States General on September 6, 1658, protesting against Charles Stuart's visiting his sister at Honslardyke, is inserted by some eighteenth-century owner of the Journal a copy of "*The Student, or the Oxford Monthly Miscellany*, Number III, March 31, 1750."

This 1750 newspaper contains what purports to be "a transcript from the handwriting of the famous Mr. Lockhart, author of the *Memoirs of Scotland*; and that the original manuscript was inserted in a blank leaf of a volume of Lord Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*, to which author the introduction to the story particularly refers." As the first instalment of Clarendon's *History* was not published till 1702, it is clear that the story was not recorded by Lockhart till some twenty years at least after Downing's death. At the same time, this fact does not discredit it, especially as the famous Mr. Lockhart was himself the nephew of Downing's contemporary and friend, Sir William Lockhart, the Ambassador at Paris. Moreover, the network of espionage created by Thurloe and Downing had dangers for its creators, and Downing might thus have preferred to carry out his bearded and clandestine errand himself, rather than run the risk of employing a third party, who might reveal the whole affair to Thurloe.

The story purports to explain how it came about that

[1] Downing's MS. Journal, f. 138.

Charles II forgave and rewarded at the Restoration one who had been so dangerous an enemy. But such an explanation is unnecessary, as will be presently shown.

Among the Royalist spies employed by Downing and Thurloe at the Hague was one Tom Howard, a brother of the Earl of Suffolk. In a letter of August 29 (N.S.), 1658, to Thurloe, Downing explains how he had entrapped Howard into his power, though Howard does not know it. The said Howard, Downing writes, " had a whoor in this country, with which he trusted his secrets and papers : these two afterwards falling out, a person in this town got all the papers from her." Howard instituted a lawsuit, being exceedingly anxious to recover the papers, which might ruin him should their contents become known. Downing has got hold of these papers, and herewith sends copies to Secretary Thurloe.

" It is the same Tom Howard that was in the town, and Charles Stuart's letter to him refers to that his journey into England. I believe by some inclings which I have, that he is desirous to go againe into England : what if you should let him have a passe (if he shall desire it) as about his private affaires, and then seize him ; or otherwise that you think fitt, to let the business lye by a time, as to the making use of it against him. But if it should be known I have given you this account he would endeavour to have me killed." [1]

On October 18 (N.S.), 1658, Downing writes to Thurloe giving him various secrets about Royalist movements furnished him by Tom Howard, whom he has " gained." " I think I can hardly pitch upon for one a fitter instrument than Tom Howard, he being master of the horse to the princesse Royal ; and I shall endeavour to improve him." [2] Later in the same month he sends some further information betrayed by Tom Howard, who asks a salary of £1,000 per annum for his nefarious labours.[3]

It is now necessary to leap over a period of rather more than a year. Between November, 1659, and the end of

[1] Thurloe, VII, 344–9. [2] Id., VII, 426–9. [3] Id., VII, 440–5.

January, 1660, Downing was in England. He had returned on private affairs, and also to receive orders from the Government.[1] The Government decided to continue him in his embassy,[2] and on January 28, 1660, Downing started back for the Hague. While he was in England he had occupied himself at his office as one of the four Tellers of the Receipt of the Exchequer, a lucrative post he had held since 1657.[3] The duties of the post will be hereafter described in connection with George Downing's work at the Treasury. Meanwhile, it is very worthy of note that Downing's clerk in the office was no less a person than Samuel Pepys, eminent as a Civil Servant, and pre-eminent as a Diarist.

Pepys could not quite make Downing out. The truth appears to have been that Downing genuinely thought well of Pepys as a competent person. He suggested that Pepys should accompany him to the Hague, but not very pressingly, and Pepys suspected that Downing's chief motive was to get rid of him as a clerk.[4]

His suspicions were not allayed even when Downing on January 19, 1660, sent for him and " at his bedside he told me, that he had a kindness for me, and that he thought that he had done me one ; and that was, that he had got me to be one of the Clerks of the Council." [5] Finally Pepys was genuinely impressed by Downing's friendly farewell just before he embarked for Holland, and as some slight return, the Diarist hurriedly sent for his best fur cap, which he proposed to present to Downing. The Ambassador's barge, however, had dropped down the Thames before Pepys could overtake him. So Pepys was able to keep his fur cap, which was well, for it was greatly admired by his friend Mrs. Michell, a bookseller in Westminster Hall,[6]

[1] See p. 110.

[2] *Cal. State Papers Dom.*, 1659–60—January 14, 1660; and Whitlocke's *Memorials*, p. 693.

[3] *Harleian Miscellany*, III, 454.

[4] Pepys, *Diary*, Vol. I, 18 (Wheatley's edition, 1923).

[5] Id., *Diary*, Vol. I, 22.

[6] Id., Vol. I, 32–3.

whose pretty daughter-in-law, Betty, Pepys was later in the habit of kissing at the Old Swan.[1]

Though, doubtless, the reader, and certainly the biographer, would much prefer to linger at the Old Swan—for before the charm and prettiness of Betty Michell the centuries shrivel up as though they had never been—it is unfortunately necessary to hasten after George Downing to the Hague.

Some time early in March (N.S.), 1660—but the letter is undated—Downing wrote to Thurloe congratulating him on his return to office. At the end of his letter he says: "I pray God send peace and settlement at home: men talk heere very strangely. I shold be infinitely obliged to you, that you would a little let me know what things are like to come to."[2]

Looking back to those early months of 1660, it is easy now to see that the Restoration was inevitable. But to the men of the time the inscrutable scroll of Fate unrolled itself with its wonted deliberation. Hence only one man in England really knew what was about to happen; he knew because he had planned it for months past, and he had planned it because he was one of those rare men who in history deserve the name of Statesman. For Statesmanship consists in anticipating that immanent and mysterious force, the general will, and in silently preparing and making smooth the way for its realization. Precisely when Monk perceived that the Restoration was the only means of escape from the anarchy of the Republicans on the one hand, or the tyranny of the Soldiers on the other, and that the secret feeling of plain men was in favour of the Restoration of the monarchy, is not known. But from the time that he entered London with his army on February 3, 1660, all his actions are the actions of a man who is moving towards a distant but definite goal. It is not possible here to relate all his visible steps—of which the most important were his insistence on the return of the excluded members (February 21), the dissolution of the Long Parliament (March 16),

[1] Pepys, *Diary*, Vols. V and VI, passim [2] Thurloe, VII, 837–8.

and the election of a new and representative Parliament (April 25). While his visible steps all proved themselves to be in complete accord with public opinion, he took also his invisible steps. On March 19, he opened secret relations with the exiled King through the medium of his cousin, Sir John Greenville.

Between the King—guided by Hyde, and Monk in liaison with Admiral Montagu, everything was soon arranged, and the patient conspirators awaited the meeting of the new Parliament. They now knew what the result would be, for public opinion was declaring itself in remarkable manifestions of loyalty ;[1] but they desired to wait until the wave had reached its crest.

The late Scoutmaster-General concluded that he also must take action, and it is not a little significant that at almost precisely the same time that Sir John Greenville reached Brussels (March 26, O.S.) with Monk's proposals, Downing entered into relations with Tom Howard.

On April 5 (N.S., i.e. March 26, O.S.) Howard wrote to the Marquis of Ormonde. He has something, he says, of moment to reveal. He knows that he is in disfavour through malicious rumour, nevertheless, he thinks he can now do a service. Downing had sent for him yesterday, and told him he desired to promote His Majesty's service which he had hitherto obstructed,

> "alleging to be engaged in a contrary party by his father, who was banished into *New England*, where he was brought up, and had sucked in principles that since his reason had made him see were erroneous, and that he never was in arms but since the King's death, nor had never taken oath or engagement of any kind."

Downing had then shown Howard a letter in cypher from Secretary Thurloe reporting on the feeling in the army, and the favourable attitude of the people. If, says Downing, the King will pardon him, and accept his services, he will work secretly on the army, in which he has considerable influence.

1 Pepys, *Diary*, Vol. I, passim.

On April $\frac{10}{20}$ Ormonde replied to Howard saying that the King would not look back on past "deviations," but would accept "the overtures he [Downing] makes of returning to his duty." How his duty can best be accomplished the King leaves to Downing. The matter will, of course, be kept secret.

On April $\frac{13}{23}$ Howard replies. Downing "at first seemed a little timorous: but I have satisfied him." Downing has written to Thurloe highly in the King's favour. He has also shown Howard a letter from Thurloe in which Monk is reported as saying he was against kingly government. Downing thinks Monk "a great rogue," and only out for his own hand. Howard begs Ormonde to acquaint the King with this information.[1]

Correspondence between Downing and Thurloe continued till April $\frac{20}{30}$. Both openly now refer to "the King": no longer merely to Charles Stuart. Thurloe evidently thinks the Restoration imminent; of the old Cromwellians "all are trayters now, all rebells" in the public eye. The last words of the last letters between the old friends are characteristic. Thurloe promises to send Downing money to pay a spy to report comings and goings at Breda, where the King now is. Downing presses for payment of his salary: "I am now five weeks behindhand."[2]

It is customary to speak of Downing as "betraying" Thurloe's dispatches. So in one sense he did, but was it

[1] *A Collection of Original Letters and Papers, concerning the Affairs of England, from the Year* 1641 *to* 1660. Found among the Duke of Ormonde's Papers by Tho. Carte, M.A. Vol. II, pp. 319–23. 1739. Lord Clarendon (*Continuation*, Vol. II, pp. 424–6, ed. 1761) gives rather a different account of Downing's negotiations with Ormonde, according to which Downing put Ormonde on his guard against some traitor in the Royalist camp (is this Howard?), and also promised him secret intelligence of doings in England and Holland—apparently at an earlier date than the date of the Howard-Ormonde letters. Aitzema (Vol. IX, 854, ed. 1664) links up Downing's secret dealings with those of Monk, whom he represents as Downing's mediator with the King.

[2] Thurloe, VII, 886–7, 902–3.

without Thurloe's cognizance? This is very doubtful, for on April $\frac{1}{2}\frac{3}{3}$ Hyde writes to Sir John Greenville saying that Thurloe had made

"very frank overtures . . . with many great professions of resolving to serve the King; and not only in his owne endeavours, but by the service of his friends, who are easily guessed at. This comes through the hands of a person, who will not deceave us, nor is easily to be deceaved himself . . ." [1]

Whatever Downing's secret services were, they were evidently important, for he was knighted by Charles II at Breda on May 21.[2] "By the same token," says Pepys, who was now with the Fleet acting as Secretary to his cousin, Admiral Montagu, "he [Downing] called me to him when I was going to write the order [for a ship for his passage into England], to tell me that I must write him Sir G. Downing." [3]

To the modern reader all this revelation of tortuous deception must necessarily seem a little shocking. But if he will reflect, if he will think himself back two and a half centuries, he will realize that the times were such that deception was almost virtuous. Perhaps there could be no more powerful condemnation of Revolution than that escape from it should only be possible through clandestine and crooked ways. Nevertheless, these ways were inevitable if an exhausted England were to be saved from the vast evil of more chaos and more bloodshed. The implacable Republicans—the Sidneys, the Haselrigs and the Vanes, the ambitious or restless soldiers,—the Lamberts and the Okeys, the tedious Presbyterians with their intolerable and intolerant Covenant, none of these could govern England.[4] But they could and did fight among them-

[1] Thurloe, VII, 897–8.

[2] *The Knights of England*, by W. A. Shaw, Vol. II, 226.

[3] Pepys, *Diary*, Vol. I, 143–4.

[4] As an illustration of the merely obstructive methods of the Republicans in Richard Cromwell's Parliament at the beginning of the year 1659, see Appendix B, a brilliant letter from Andrew Marvell to Downing which has not, I believe, hitherto been printed, and which I found in *B.M. Add. MSS.*, 22,919, f. 78.

selves, to the despair and distraction of plain men, whose blood they spilt as well as their own. Had either or all three of these minority groups—for they were definitely unpopular minorities—realized what was in the secret and capacious mind of Monk, or in the mind of Montagu, the Restoration would have been accomplished only through needless bloodshed.

It is to Monk's perpetual praise that he enabled the people at last, through a freely elected Parliament—the first freely elected Parliament for twenty years—to express the general will. Thus the King was peacefully recalled, and at last, on May 29, 1660, attended with great lustre by the Lord Mayor, the Sheriffs and the Aldermen, he entered London, to the tumultuous acclamations of vast throngs.[1]

[1] See the description in Clarendon, *The Continuation, etc.*, Vol. II, pp. 13–15, ed. 1761.

For a compendious description of the course of events in England during the year preceding the Restoration the reader should consult Sir Charles Firth's masterly contribution on the subject to the *Cambridge Modern History*, Vol. IV, chapter xix.

CHAPTER SEVEN

DOMESTIC INTERLUDE : SIR GEORGE DOWNING BUYS ESTATES IN THE COUNTY OF CAMBRIDGE, AND A LEASE OF LAND IN WESTMINSTER AND WHITEHALL : ORIGIN OF DOWNING STREET

SHALLOW. Nay, you shall see mine orchard, where, in an arbour, we will eat a last year's pippin of my own graffing, with a dish of caraways, and so forth; . . .
FALSTAFF. 'Fore God, you have here a goodly dwelling, and a rich.
SHALLOW. Barren, barren, barren; beggars all, beggars all, Sir John; . . .
—Second Part of *King Henry IV*, Act V, Sc. III, ls. 1–8.

AMID the maelstrom of politics, diplomacy, and intrigue matters domestic have inevitably fallen rather out of sight. It will, therefore, be well to ignore temporarily Sir George Downing's doings in the great world, and consider how things were developing in the domestic sphere.

Fortunately his mother, Lucy Downing, kept up her habit of letter-writing, and it is from her pen that the most intimate details of the Downing "interior" may be obtained.

From a letter of hers to her nephew, John Winthrop, in New England, dated March 27, 1658, it appears that by that date Frances Downing—George's wife—had presented her husband with two children, a son and a daughter. "She hath been very weak and in great danger, but now, I bless God, wee hear of her recovering." Lucy goes on to say how happy she herself and her husband are at Edinburgh, Emmanuel, it will be remembered, being now Clerk

to the Council of State in Scotland. There are some excellent preachers there : " Mr. Collins is a man very precious, and of eminent parts, and wee have him and two more excellent men, allowed by his Highness for the Councill. They all preach by tourns, before the Councill at the English church." Her son Joshua is " collector for Glasco which is a place comended far above this citie ; they have as yet no child."[1] In a postscript she makes this pleasant remark which would have delighted Dr. Johnson : " My scribe is a Scott, and makes such pittiful English, next to nonsence ; but he only wayts upon my husban, and is not imployed for the councell busines."

Some time between 1659 and 1660 Emmanuel Downing died. In his seventy-five years of life he had seen much. His boyhood had been passed in the splendid reign of Queen Elizabeth, his early manhood in the peaceful reign of James I, his middle life in the years of gathering storm of Charles. Then for sixteen years he had been one of the most useful members of the Massachusetts Colony in New England. His last years were spent in Scotland, as a civil servant under the administration of the Protectorate. From the glimpses which the reader has caught of him in this book he will, I hope, have been able to form a fairer judgment of Emmanuel than an eminent American, no less a person than Professor James Russell Lowell, has formed, apparently from a too hasty study of Emmanuel's correspondence.[2]

Professor Lowell compares Emmanuel Downing with Hugh Peter, as types of the selfish, worldly Puritan. Whatever may be said of the Puritan divine, of whom I agree it is difficult to speak with charity, it is plainly absurd to compare with him an unpretentious layman. In any case, the personality of Emmanuel seems to me to be much more pleasing than the personality of Peter. Nevertheless, had Peter passed his bustling, worldly, coarse career as a

[1] *Mass. Hist. Soc. Colls.*, Series V, Vol. I, pp. 45–7.

[2] See the essay, " New England Two Centuries Ago," in Vol. IV of the *Complete Writings of J. R. Lowell*, published by the Riverside Press, 1904.

layman, much might have been forgiven him. It is his association with divine matters which makes his record so unedifying.[1]

After the death of her husband, Lucy Downing seems to have spent a great part of the remaining years of her life in the newly purchased country house of her prosperous son George. This was the manor-house of East Hatley, in the south-west corner of the county of Cambridge.

George Downing bought the East Hatley estate in January, 1661, and from that time on he added acre to acre in the neighbourhood until he had acquired the largest estate in the county.[2]

Lucy writes from East Hatley on October 19, 1661, to her nephew, John Winthrop, who was then on a visit from the New England to the Old :

" My dear husban would a joyed much to a seene you hear. . . Providence hath passed apon me, and att present set me hear, whear a little sollitarines is the moste of my sufferance hitherto ; for I bles God the chilldrin [Sir George's] and my selfe have had our healthe,

[1] As I always find it hard to write with patience of Hugh Peter, the reader should consult—for a more favourable impression—Sir Charles Firth's excellent account of him in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, which vindicates him from the bitter diatribes of Royalist contemporaries, and certainly makes the best of an unamiable person.

[2] Through the kindness of the Reverend H. W. P. Stevens, Vicar of Tadlow, Cambs, I give the dates at which Downing acquired certain of the properties in the neighbourhood. Dr. W. H. Palmer extracted the particulars for Mr. Stevens from the *Feet of Fines* of the county in the P.R.O.: Hilary 12–13 Charles II, Manor of East Hatley; Mich. 14 Ch. II, lands in Tadlow; Hilary 14–15 Ch. II, advowson of East Hatley; Hilary and Trinity 15 Ch. II, more lands in Tadlow; Trinity 16 Ch. II, more lands in Tadlow; Trinity 28 Ch. II, more lands in Tadlow; Mich. 29 Ch. II, the Manor of Clopton; Pasch. 30 Ch. II, more lands in Tadlow; Pasch. 32 Ch. II, lands in Croydon. Moreover, in 1678 Sir George Downing acquired two-thirds of Hereford's Manor in Wrestlingworth in the bordering county of Bedfordshire (*V.C.H. of Bedfordshire*, Vol. II, p. 257), and some time about this period he purchased Gamlingay Park, a few miles from East Hatley (see the letter of his son, pp. 285–7). For the statement that his estate was the largest in the county, see Sibley, *Biographical Sketches of Graduates of Harvard University*, Vol. I, p. 41.

and they are pritty companye for an ould grandmother, and indeed my sonns lady is very civil to me, and in every letter she desiers me to make much of my selfe, and to have what I like apon her cost. . . . It is a fortnight since I heard from the Hauge : they wear then well, and my sonn was then, by the Kings command, goeing to the Duke of Brandingburg to the Dyet. . . . Sir, I am tedious, but your poor aunt to serve you." [1]

Again, on November 25, she writes to her nephew thanking him for sending her news of her married daughters in New England. She invites him and his sons to East Hatley : it is only twelve miles from Hitchin, to which the coach goes weekly from London, and to Hitchin she will send horses to meet them, " and a guide for the way " : as for the roads their condition is dreadful, " 8 mylles of it being a claye."[2]

In a postscript she gives fuller details of the coach times. The Hitchin coach from London comes down three days a week, on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday : " it lyes at the Goulden Ball in Old streete." Further, " a rockinge coache " comes to Biggleswade, " but seaven mylls from us " ; where this coach lies one may hear at the " the Baall " ; i.e. the Golden Ball in Hitchin.

I find Lucy Downing's letters so fascinating, that I am tempted to linger over them. For in them it is possible to see reflected not only her own image, but the image of her son. To his mother George owed his hard-headedness, and his capacity for writing diplomatic dispatches crammed with picturesque sense, and also with humour. Were Lucy alive to-day she would, doubtless, be a Member of Parliament, possibly even a Parliamentary Under-Secretary, certainly a prominent member of a County Council Education Committee.[3]

[1] *Mass. Hist. Soc. Colls.*, Series V, Vol. I, pp. 51–2.

[2] Id., Series V, Vol. I, pp. 52–3.

[3] Lucy refers caustically to man-made laws in a letter written from Salem, *circa* 1640 ; she is referring to Hugh Peter, who is much censured in a certain matter, and observes—" but whilst men make our lawes they are fitest to judg of them." *Mass. Hist. Soc. Colls.*, Series V, Vol. I, p. 27.

Space, however, forbids more than a rapid survey of Lucy's remaining letters. On January 17, 1661–2, she suggests to her nephew that it would be better to postpone a visit till the roads are fitter for travelling, moreover, "ouer little ones heare . . . have never yet had neither pokes [smallpox] nor measells," one or other of which diseases the younger John Winthrop's son seems to have just had. She has had a very bad pain in her left side, and has applied "hot brikes" to it, and "bages of fried oats"; these relieved it, but more still a plaster prescribed by the doctor, since when "both my stumok and my weast are much better."[1] On April 20, 1662, she explains to her nephew why she can't get up to London to see him, as her son is making a purchase of land near East Hatley, and she is looking after the business for him during his absence at the Hague.[2]

On February 13, 1663–4, she writes to John Winthrop saying that her son George desires that she shall still stay at East Hatley; it is rather solitary there, "but I hope tyme will discover some other meanes more for his advantage, or more sutable to myself." She supposes her nephew has heard how the King has made George "Knight Baronet, and gave him a thousand pounds, as a token of his favour." He has had another son, William, and the Prince of Orange was his godfather. The winter has been most temperate "soe yt wee have been planting trees at Hatley allmost all this winter. Yr cozen George (I thinke) will plant all the lordshippe wh apples and walnuts."[3]

Meanwhile there had passed between John Winthrop and his first cousin, Sir George Downing, some very curious correspondence. On May 9, 1662, John Winthrop writes to Sir George. He much regrets he has not yet been able to visit his aunt—George's mother, and does not know what her condition is in her old age, but he fears the ser-

[1] *Mass. Hist. Soc. Colls.*, Series V, Vol. I, pp. 54–5.
[2] Id., Series V, Vol. I, p. 56.
[3] Id., Series V, Vol. I, pp. 58–61. Sir George Downing was created a Baronet on July 1, 1663: see Cokayne's *Baronetage*.

vants may be neglecting her. He has heard nothing from her of this. Still, she is getting old and ought to have honourable provision made for her. For this end, amongst others, God has blessed George Downing with a large estate ; pray consider, therefore, settling an annuity of at least £100 on her. " Excuse my motion for so deserving a friend ; who, might her age beare the trouble of so long a passage, and your consent to it, should have the absolute command of whatever in that wildernesse [New England] is possessed by your humble servant J.W."[1]

George Downing's reply to this extraordinary intervention by his cousin in his most intimate family affairs was as follows :

Sir George Downing to John Winthrop, JR.

Ffor my honored . . . John Winth[rop] . . . London, these
Deliver this to my sister Peters to be sent.

Sir, I have received yours of 9th instant, and am very glad to heare of your good health, and thank you for your thoughts of my mother, but I do not know how it is in my power to do more or better for her than is, at present. Shee is at my house, not forty myles from London, in a good place and as yet well. Shee hath two of my children with her and hath the disposing of what is myne. For yourselfe and yours I wish you all happynesse ; and as for myselfe I thank God for what I have enjoyed, yet it fares with me as with many others. I expect 'tis thought thrice as much as I have got.

I am Sir your most aff. cosen and humb. servant
G. Downing.

Hague, May 16th 1662. Old Style.[2]

The concluding words of Sir George Downing's letter echo very remarkably those of Justice Shallow to Sir John Falstaff, quoted at the head of this chapter—" Barren, barren, barren ; beggars all, beggars all, Sir John."

But this is not the end of the affair. John Winthrop goes down to East Hatley, writes to Sir George Downing again, and receives the following letter from Sir George :

[1] *Mass. Hist. Soc. Colls.*, Series IV, Vol. VI, pp. 524–5.
[2] Id., Series IV, Vol. VI, p. 543.

Sir George Downing to John Winthrop, JR.

Ffor my much honord Cosen John Winthrop Esq. London. These.

Sir, I have received your very kind letter, for which I heartily thank you. You did me a great honour to be pleased to goe so farre to a dirty hoole to see my mother and children, and you may be sure that she is not, nor shall not be at command or finding of any servant of myne, but on the other hand dispose of them. For what you write of a certayne earth there, which you think to be marl, I pray in what field or ground was it digged? for I [am] much in doupt I have not any earth better than a claye there. I pray my hearty love and service to your good lady and all my cosens; I am sorry my cosen was so confined in time that I could not shew him that kindnesse I would, and wishing you a very good voyage and safe arrivall, remayne

Sir, your most aff. cosen and humb. servant

G. DOWNING

Hague, June 27th, 1662 (old style).

If you do write again to me, leave it at my sister Peters, and so it will come safe to me.[1]

It must be admitted that these letters throw no very amiable light upon Sir George Downing. Undoubtedly meanness in money matters was his besetting sin. Pepys found him "so stingy a fellow I care not to see him."[2] On the other hand, Lucy Downing seems to have been a little querulous and trying. After all, she lived at East Hatley in her son's house for ten years. I deduce this from her letter to one of her daughters in New England—either Lucy Norton, or Ann Gardner, written from Gardener Lane (in the City of Westminster) on April 17, 1674, where she says, "and my hearing hath much declined this 3 years last, for the help of which I did advise with a Cambridg doctor, a very able experienced dotor before I came to London, and he tould me I must expect my age to be a great meanes thereof. . . ."[3] Cambridge is only some twelve miles from East Hatley.

[1] *Mass. Hist. Soc. Colls.*, Series IV, Vol. VI, pp. 543–4.

[2] Pepys, *Diary*, Vol. I, p. 173, under "June 28, 1660."

[3] *Mass. Hist. Soc. Colls.*, Series V, Vol. I, pp. 61–3.

In this same letter she explains how hard it is to live on £23 a year,

"and more your brother Georg will not hear of for me; and that it is onely covetousnes that maks me aske for more. He last sumer bought another town, near Hatley, called Clappam [Clopton ?] cost him 13 or 14 thousand pound, [this must be an absurdly exaggerated price] and I really beleeve one of us 2 are indeed covetous." Coals are a dreadful price, and so is wheat: "the good Lord help me to live by fayth, and not by sence, whilst he pleas to afforde me a life in this world."

Four years later, on May 14, 1678, Lucy Downing wrote her last letter, or the last letter of which there is record. She was now very old, in her seventy-eighth year, and she seems still to be living in Gardener's Lane, in the house of her daughter Martha Peters, who married one Captain Peters—presumably some relation of Hugh Peter, or Peters, the divine. It would seem that the Peters were not well off, for Lucy Downing paid her daughter for her board and lodging. The letter is very querulous, she is "extrordinary weake," in her legs, and has a very bad cough, and has to pay her daughter much more than she can afford for her room, and although all the furniture in it is "my owne yet yo'r sister Peters [Lucy is writing to her daughter Ann whose second husband was Governor Simon Bradstreet of Massachusetts] will not abate me one peny of seven pounds a yere for it"; altogether she is in a very bad way. Yet, later on in the letter she admits that Lady Downing lends her her coach now and again, and the children Mary and Ann have been to see her, "indeed they are all very handsome well bred Children . . . yo'r Nece Cotton [Frances Downing, daughter of Sir George, who married the son and heir of Sir John Cotton, of Stratton Park, Bedfordshire] hath a daughter and she is big againe." And so she proceeds with more gossip of grandchildren, and possible great-grandchildren. She ends up in a postscript:

"This day I found my Lady Downing but very weake and wears much and daily takes the aier in her Coach and wants no meanes that art and nature can afford for her Comfort. The litel ones caried me in their Coach to Hide Park and brought me home again." [1]

Within a year of the date of this letter, on April 19, 1679, Lucy Downing entered—to use the beautiful phrase of her nephew, John Winthrop—" the confines of a better inheritance." [2] Certainly Sir George's meanness to his mother is hard to forgive. Yet it is not possible to acquit her of characteristics which developed, in her son, into an overwhelming worldliness and hardness. When this has been said, let us rather remember her for her friendliness, for her efficiency, for her " forward-looking " mind, above all for her excellence as a letter-writer.

About the same time that Sir George Downing was purchasing estates in the County of Cambridge, he was also purchasing the lease of a property in London. It is not extravagant to suggest—bearing in mind the traditional Downing belief in learning—that Sir George chose his country property where he did because of its neighbourhood to the ancestral University of Cambridge, ancestral in the case both of Downings and Winthrops. Certain it is that to that University he sent his three sons George, William and Charles in due course.[3] In choosing his London property he displayed a similar, though more worldly, far-sightedness.

Whitehall in Sir George's day was just as much the

[1] *Mass. Hist. Soc. Proceedings*, 1895, 1896, Second Series, Vol. X, pp. 186–8.

[2] *Mass. Hist. Soc. Colls.*, Series IV, Vol. VI, pp. 524–5.

[3] Sir George's son George (who wrote the charming letter to his father quoted hereafter) was born *circa* 1656, and was admitted as a Fellow Commoner at Clare in February, 1668–9. He was admitted also at Lincoln's Inn, October 5, 1669. Teller of the Exchequer, 1680–9. Succeeded his father in the Baronetcy 1684. Sheriff of Cambs and Hants, 1686–7. Father of the founder of Downing College. Benefactor to Clare College. Died June, 1711. Brother of William (1678) and Charles (1683).—*Alumni Cantabrigienses*, by J. and J. A. Venn.

centre of Government as it is to-day. The only difference is that, whereas in his day the Palace included the Government Departments as appendages, the Government Departments now tower upon the site once occupied by the Palace, of which almost the sole survival to represent its ancient dignity is the Banqueting Hall, the superb creation of Inigo Jones.

The Palace at this time stretched from Great Scotland Yard, near Charing Cross, to Cannon Row, Westminster. On one side was the river to which stairs descended for passage by royal barge and boat ; on the other St. James's Park. Bordering the Park were the Tilt Yard (now the Horse Guards Parade), the Cockpit Buildings, and the Tennis Court (now the sites of the Treasury and the Privy Council Office respectively). A public road, known in its southern section as King Street, ran through the Palace precincts, connecting Charing Cross with Westminster. This road was arched at two points by magnificent gateways : the one decorated by Holbein and called after him, connected the Banqueting Hall with St. James's Park and the buildings bordering it ; the other was close to the point now occupied by the Cenotaph, and was known as the New Gate.[1]

This immense palace which had been the residence of some of England's greatest rulers, of Cardinal Wolsey, of Henry VIII, of Queen Elizabeth, of Cromwell, and of William III, no longer remains in sculpted stone and gateway, with its galleries, courts, and turrets, its bowling-green, its gardens, and its orchards.[2] Nevertheless, it has bequeathed to posterity its tradition as the seat of government, of imperial administration, and of power. Within its precincts a small strip of ground, which before 1684

[1] See the *Old Royal Palace of Whitehall*, by E. Sheppard ; J. T. Smith's *Antiquities of Westminster* ; Wheatley's and Cunningham's *London Past and Present* ; Stow's *Survey* (edition 1720) ; Knight's *London* ; Besant's *Survey of London North of the Thames* ; and, of course, Pepys's *Diary*, passim.

[2] The greater part of the Palace was destroyed by two fires, the one in 1691, the other in 1697.

was beginning to be known as "Downing Streete,"[1] nestles in decent modesty, as becomes one of the most famous streets in the world.

It appears that as early as 1660—though the date is not certainly known—Sir George Downing was contemplating a lease of the piece of ground which now bears his name. About that date he is petitioning the King for a lease "with proviso for the handsome building of the house, which stands near the Royal Palace."[2] It was not, however, till February 23, 1663–4, that the lease was finally signed and sealed.[3]

The "messuage" in Westminster of which Sir George Downing took a ninety-nine-years' lease had previously been known as Hambden House, and together with it he took "all the buildings, yards, gardens, orchards and appurtenances thereto belonging, formerly in lease to Sir Tho. Knevet Kt."[4] It was bounded on the south (i.e. towards Westminster) by a house called the Peacock,[5] and by the New Gate, and on the north (i.e. towards the Horse Guards Parade) "by an old passage leading to a court called Pheasant Court in part, and an old passage leading from the great garden to St. James's Park in part." On the west it abutted on St. James's Park, and on the east on King Street. Sir George was not to build on this piece of land on its western side "further than the West part of the house called the Cock-pit was then built." That is to say, he must not abut too much on the Park.

In 1681 Sir George petitioned for "authority to build new and more houses further westward." The reason of his petition was that the Cockpit "or the greater part thereof is since demolished," other great houses had lately been

[1] See Sir George Downing's Will, Appendix C.

[2] *Calendar of State Papers Dom.*, 1660–1, p. 457.

[3] The original lease is in the P.R.O. in the Land Revenue Enrolment Book for Essex, Middlesex, etc., 1st Vol.: *Charles II*, p. 322.

[4] See the documents quoted in Appendix D.

[5] Peacock House or Court was leased by Sir George from "the Collegiate Church of St. Peter, Westminster": see his Will in Appendix C.

erected more westward than the said Cockpit, and the houses on his part " being all ruinous and decayed must be rebuilt." He prayed, therefore, that his lease might be renewed for ninety-nine years, and that he might build houses a little farther westward, " he intending to erect none that shall have a prospect towards the Park but such as shall be fit for persons of good quality to inhabit in, and be graceful to the said Park."

On January 25, 1681–2, a Royal Warrant granted Sir George Downing's request, after the Surveyor-General of Crown Lands, and also the Surveyor-General of the Works (who was no less a person than Sir Christopher Wren) had been consulted. Sir George must not build nearer the wall of the Park than fourteen feet. He could, however, build a sort of terrace as far as the wall, and " set flower pots or statues " upon the wall, " for the beautifying and ornament of the said buildings."[1]

Sir George Downing's builder must have built rapidly, for in his Will, dated August 24, 1683, Sir George refers to " those foure greate houses being parcell of the premises held of the Crowne fronting Saint James Parke west and north together with the Stables and Coachhouses thereto belonging," the lease of which he bequeathed to his son William.

Of these four great houses, substantial parts survive in the present No. 10 and No. 11 Downing Street, including the office, to some extent subterranean, of the Whips. But No. 10 Downing Street has also a far more romantic history. In reality it consists of two houses, and this is the explanation of its great width from front to back. That the house is architecturally in two portions may easily be seen if the spectator views the house from a point about ten yards due west of the door in the garden wall facing towards St. James's Park—not the door opening on to the Horse Guards Parade. Of the two portions of the house, the portion abutting on the street was one of the four great

[1] See documents quoted in Appendix D from *The Calendar of Treasury Books* preserved at the P.R.O. and edited by W. A. Shaw, Litt.D.

EDWARD HENRY, FIRST EARL OF LITCHFIELD

1663–1716

BY SIR G. KNELLER

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houses built by Sir George Downing. The other portion of the house abutting on the garden was either planned, or at least surveyed in 1677 by Sir Christopher Wren, the Surveyor-General of the Works. That Sir Christopher Wren drew a plan of what is now the garden portion of the house was discovered some twenty years ago.[1] But it was not then, nor, I think, has it since been discovered for whom that house was, in reality, planned or surveyed. This secret I find buried in that gold mine of historical secrets the *Calendar of Treasury Books*. From a Royal Warrant summarized therein it appears that the house was intended principally for the Earl of Litchfield and his wife, and it was thus intended because the Countess of Litchfield was the natural daughter of Charles II and Barbara Villiers, Duchess of Cleveland.[2] The date of the Royal Warrant assigning a lease of the ground and the building thereon for ninety-nine years to Trustees for Lord and Lady Litchfield and Dame Elizabeth Bertie [3] is dated May 3, 1677. The plan drawn by the Surveyor-General of the Works, Sir Christopher Wren, is dated April 10, 1677.

In February of this same year Lord Litchfield—who had just been raised from a Baronetcy to an Earldom—had married his beautiful bride Lady Charlotte Fitzroy, her age then being twelve and a half years, while her husband was just fourteen.[4] "It was justly observed that at their marriage they were the most graceful bridegroom and most beautiful bride." This charming couple had no less than eighteen children. But I must leave the epitaph upon

[1] See Vol. I of the *London Topographical Soc. Record*, pp. 38–42, article by the Editor, Mr. T. F. Ordish, F.S.A., who there reproduced the Wren plan, and Vol. II, pp. 23–6, article by Mr. Walter L. Spiers, A.R.I.B.A.

[2] See the last Document in Appendix D of this book—a copy of the entry in *The Calendar of Treasury Books*, Vol. V, Pt. I, p. 613.

[3] I am not clear why Lady Elizabeth Bertie was to participate in the lease. Her father was the Earl of Lindsey, "Great Chamberlain of England."

[4] Cokayne's (G.E.C.'s) *Complete Peerage*, Vol. V, p. 75. Cokayne suggests that Lord Litchfield was born in 1656, but the epitaph states that he died in 1716, aged 54.

the tomb of Lord and Lady Litchfield in the chancel of the country church of Spelsbury, Oxfordshire, to tell its own stately story :

"M.S. Here lye interred Edward Henry Lee, Earl of Litchfield, Viscount Quarendon, Baron of Spelsbury, and Charlotte Fitzroy, his dear Consort. He was son and heir of Sir Francis Henry Lee, of Ditchley, Bart, and of the Lady Elizabeth Pope, Daughter and heiress of Thomas, Earl of Downe ; she daughter of King Charles the Second by Barbara, Duchess of Cleveland. This Lord merited the Titles with which he honoured his family, as well by his Military and civil virtues, appearing very young in arms a Volunteer, raised by succeeding merit to the command of a regiment, and from thence presented by his Sovereign's hand as Colonel to the First Regiment of Guards ; for his politeness and breeding beloved and favoured by two Kings, and by them successively appointed of their bedchamber. This Lady adorned the eminence of her birth by the virtue of her Life, and possessed all those perfections which in her sex are great, lovely, exemplary. It was justly observed that at their marriage they were the most gracefull bridegroom and most beautiful bride, and that till death they remained the most constant husband and wife. Their conjugal affection was blest by their numerous offspring, thirteen sons and five daughters. Though they were both famed for the honors and graces of the Court, they chose very young to retire from the splendour of it. Great in a private life, and disengaged from pomp and magnificence, to obtain more leisure for charity and religion. The Earl dyed the 14th July, Anno Salutis 1716, aetatis 54. The Countess dyed the 17th Feb., Anno Salutis $17\frac{17}{18}$, aetatis suae 55." [1]

The history of No. 10 Downing Street, both the part built by Sir George Downing and the part surveyed by Sir Christopher Wren, is somewhat obscure from the early years of William III's reign, to the middle years of George I's reign.[2] Lord Litchfield was a very loyal Jacobite,

[1] I take this epitaph from G. S. Steinman's *Barbara, Duchess of Cleveland*, pp. 234–5, published in 1871 for private circulation. The Vicar of Spelsbury kindly confirmed for me that the dates at the end of the epitaph had been correctly copied.

[2] Until the new series of the *Calendar of Treasury Books* is completed by Dr. Shaw this gap will not be satisfactorily filled. That series at present extends to 1689.

CHARLOTTE FITZROY, COUNTESS OF LITCHFIELD

1664–1718

BY SIR G. KNELLER

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declined to take the Oaths, and retired into the country shortly after the Revolution of 1688. Indeed, he was more than once suspected of treason,[1] though it must be presumed he was innocent as he was never brought to trial. One domestic detail connected with the early years of the history of 10 Downing Street is worthy of record. Various houses "in or near the King's Palace of Whitehall" had, up to 1686, escaped paying the hearth or chimney tax, the owners or occupiers making excuse that they were "within the verge of the said Palace." Among others Lord Litchfield, whose house "in St. James's Park" is described as within this category of houses "within the verge," had evaded the tax. The Treasury did not approve of this loss to the revenue. Accordingly Lord Treasurer Rochester on December 8, 1686, signed a warrant decreeing that these houses should no longer escape taxation.[2]

By the time of the middle years of George I's reign the lease of the Litchfield house has either been bought back, or simply resumed by the Crown. For it is then known as the King's House, and is inhabited by Count Bothmar, George I's Hanoverian Minister. A few years elapse and the house is offered by George II to Sir Robert Walpole who accepts it, and covenants with the King that it may become the residence in perpetuity of all First Lords of the Treasury. He himself takes up his residence there in 1735. Sometime before 1749 the two portions of the house have apparently been joined up. Both at that time and early in the nineteenth century the house was largely altered and added to.[3]

[1] See *Calendar of State Papers Dom.*, 1690–1, July 14, 1690, p. 65; ditto 1691–2, June 10, 1692, p. 319. His 6th son and heir was born "in St. James's Park" (i.e. in the present 10 Downing Street), March 12, 1689–90. See Cokayne's *Complete Peerage*, Vol. V, p. 75. When Sir Robert Walpole took up his residence in 1735, the house is referred to as being in St. James's Park.

[2] *Calendar of Treasury Books*, Vol. VIII, Pt. II (1685–9), p. 1052.

[3] Mr. C. E. Pascoe's *No. 10 Downing Street*, published in 1908, gives a pleasant, though somewhat discursive history of the house. His book, however, was published three years before that volume of *The Calendar of Treasury*

It is uncertain if Sir George Downing himself ever resided in any of the houses in the street named after him. That he very prudently resided—when he was in London—in close proximity to the Palace and to the Houses of Parliament is clear from a note scrawled by him on one of the letters in his correspondence, now preserved at the British Museum. This note is to the effect, that the letter in question was handed to him on August 5, 1663, " at my house in Stephen's Court."[1] Similarly I find in the *Calendar of State Papers Domestic* a letter written by him on December 14, 1665, from " Stephen's Court, New Palace Yard, Westminster."[2]

The history of place names is indeed extraordinary. It is not more wonderful that, at this very time (1664), the capital of what was to become the greatest Republic in the World should have been named New York, after the most

Books which has enabled me to explain the mystery of the Wren plan. Mr. Pascoe, therefore, did not realize that Sir George Downing's lease did not include the ground shown in the Wren plan (reproduced in his book), nor that the present No. 10 Downing Street was at one time, as I have endeavoured to show, two separate houses. Mr. Pascoe is mistaken in giving 1671 as the date of Sir George Downing's renewed lease : the date was 1682. The book contains some excellent maps, plans and illustrations. An Office of Works plan of 1749, reproduced by Mr. Pascoe, makes it appear that by that date the two houses—the house facing the street and the house facing the garden—have been amalgamated : they are then in the occupation of the Earl of Lincoln, nephew and son-in-law of the First Lord of the Treasury, Henry Pelham.

The reader should also consult Wheatley and Cunningham's *London Past and Present* for a compendious account of Downing Street : I have not, however, found any confirmation of the statement there made that Lord Litchfield *forfeited* his Downing Street property though I have made considerable search. It seems, indeed, unlikely, for Lord Dillon tells me that his (the first Earl's son) went to Court in the days of the Hanoverians, and that there are, at Ditchley, portraits of him and his wife in their Coronation robes when George II was King. It will be noted that the terms of the lease enabled the Crown to resume possession at any time upon paying compensation (see document in Appendix D). So the forfeiture explanation is unnecessary.

[1] *B.M. Add. MSS.*, 22,920 f.6.

[2] *Calendar State Papers Dom.*, 1670 (and Addenda 1660–70), p. 704.

absolute of the Stuarts,[1] than that the Street which is now the nerve centre of the British Empire should be called after a graduate of Harvard University, who began his career as the humble Instructor of New England Seamen.

[1] See *D.N.B.* under "James II" (Duke of York), and Ranke's *History of England*, Vol. III, p. 422.

CHAPTER EIGHT

SIR GEORGE DOWNING RETURNS TO THE HAGUE AS ENVOY EXTRAORDINARY, JUNE, 1661 : HE LAYS HANDS ON THREE OF THE REGICIDES

> "Thou know'st the magistrates
> And princes of my country came in person,
> Solicited, commanded, threatened, urged,
> Adjured by all the bonds of civil duty
> And of religion—pressed how just it was,
> How honourable, how glorious to entrap
> A common enemy . . ."
>
> —*Samson Agonistes*, ls. 850–6.

DURING the year which elapsed between Downing's return to England in May, 1660, and his reappointment as Envoy Extraordinary at the Hague in May, 1661, little is heard of him. He appears, however, to have been actively engaged in advising the government in matters commercial upon which he was held to be a very great authority.[1] It is, indeed, probable

[1] As early as December 25, 1655, Downing was added to the Trade Committee of the Council of State. See *Calendar State Papers Dom.*, 1655–6, p. 73. The Dutch Ambassador in England, in a letter of May 4, 1657, refers to Downing "as the first in the Commission for the examining of the business of the Netherland Merchants of the intercourse," i.e. the Great Act of Intercourse of 1495. Thurloe, VI, 228. Several very interesting letters of Downing's on commercial matters in 1658–9, e.g. the injurious incidence of Customs duties as compared with Excise, will be found in the *Clarke Papers*, Vol. III, edited by Sir Charles Firth. See also *Calendar State Papers Dom.*, 1659–60, p. 104, a letter of President of the Council Whitlocke dated August 12, 1659, saying that the Council were preparing an Act to prevent the transport of wool on Downing's advice.

that he owed his first appointment as Resident at the Hague in 1658 largely to his interest in, and knowledge of trade. As the Dutch were easily pre-eminent in world trade in the seventeenth century it was desirable that the British representative should be a man intimately acquainted with commercial matters. It is not, therefore, surprising to find the following entry in Pepys's *Diary* under date January 22, 1661 :

"... To Mercer's Chappell, and so up to the great hall, where we met with the King's Councell for Trade, upon some proposals of theirs for settling convoys for the whole English trade, and that by having 33 ships (four fourth-rates, nineteen fifths, ten sixths) settled by the king for that purpose, which indeed was argued very finely by many persons of honour and merchants that were there. It pleased me much now to come in this condition to this place, where I was once a petitioner for my exhibition in Paul's School ; and also where Sir G. Downing (my late master) was chairman, and so but equally concerned with me."

Downing was a great believer in the convoy system. At one time—early in 1659—he even suggested that it should be made compulsory. "This foolish fancy," he said, "of getting first to the market makes so many never come thither." The Dutch used convoys for their rich merchant fleets, and Downing very sensibly tried to introduce good Dutch ideas into England.[1]

The Council of Trade had been set up by Charles II on November 7, 1660, and this Council, together with the Council of Foreign Plantations constituted on December 1, is the direct ancestor of the modern Board of Trade.[2]

It was held to be necessary that the King's coronation should have taken place before his representatives abroad could proceed to their posts. The coronation was carried

[1] *The Clarke Papers*, ed. by C. H. Firth, Vol. III, pp. 177–9, letter from Downing to Secretary Thurloe, $\frac{\text{Jany. } 28}{\text{Feb. } 7}$, 1658–9.

[2] See H. B. Wheatley's footnote, p. 308, Vol. II, Pepys's *Diary*, 1923 edition.

out with unparalleled splendour on April 23, 1661, and thereafter on May 4 a Royal Warrant was issued to the Lord Treasurer authorizing him to pay Sir George Downing, Knt., "appointed to be our Envoye Extraordinary to the States Gen[l] of the United Provinces," £500 for his transportation, and £5 a day during his residence. In addition he was to receive such further sums for "Intelligence and other private services" which cannot at present be foreseen, but which may be vouched for by "one of our Principal Secretarys" from time to time.[1]

Early in June Downing arrived at the Hague, and on June 8–18, 1661, he was received in audience at an illustrious assembly of the States General.[2] The remarkable speech which Downing delivered on that occasion will be referred to later, together with some account of the complications which preceded the second Dutch War. For the present it will be well to deal separately with an episode which is undoubtedly the ugliest in his career.

Nevertheless, though Downing's part in the arrest of the three Regicides, Corbet, Barkstead and Okey, is not other than shocking to modern opinion, it is essential to have regard, in considering this matter, to the situation of 1662, rather than to the sentiment of 1924.

Thus contemporary opinion separated by a great gulf those who had sat in judgment on Charles I, and who had signed his death warrant, and the rest of the Parliamentary or Puritan party. The execution of the King had not been approved by the majority of Puritans at the time, and it had profoundly shocked plain opinion throughout Europe.[3] When the Restoration took place, the sur-

[1] *B.M. Add. MSS.*, 22,919, f. 146. Also *Calendar of Treasury Books*, Vol. I, p. 527, letter of Treasurer Southampton of June 1, from which it appears that Downing claimed he could not "conveniently stir" without a large advance!

[2] Japikse, *De Verwikkelingen Tusschen de Republick en Engeland van* 1660–1665, p. 119.

[3] For a detailed account of the circumstances of the King's death see the first Essay in my *Gossip of the 17th and 18th Centuries* (Cobden-Sanderson, 1923)

viving Regicides were expressly excepted from the Act of Indemnity. Of these ten were executed in 1660, and twenty-five were imprisoned for life.[1] As late as 1689 public opinion was so intensely hostile to the Regicides that Ludlow, who had then come quietly to London expecting that the Revolution of 1688 would have changed the political atmosphere, was compelled to make his escape as best he could. Not even the most ardent Whig in the House of Commons dared to oppose the warrant for his arrest. In the incomparable language of Macaulay: "The sufferings of Charles were confounded with the sufferings of the Redeemer of Mankind, and every regicide was a Judas, a Caiaphas or a Herod."[2]

In the second place Downing was expressly under orders from Lord Clarendon, who from 1660 to 1667 was Lord High Chancellor and, in effect, Prime Minister, to do all he could to arrest those of the Regicides who had fled overseas. Almost immediately after his arrival at the Hague, Downing received a letter written by the youthful Lord Cornbury on behalf of his father on June 21, 1661, in the course of which he says:

"My father is very much troubled to heare of so great a concourse of disaffected people into those parts, but he desires you will still have an eye upon what persons doe come over thither. . . ."[3]

And again, writing to his father's direct dictation on July 19, 1661:

"I am sure I did tell you in one of my letters that you were to doe all you could *to lay hands upon the rogues*.[4] Concerning the great concourse of English People in Holland (wch you mention), I will say something of it in my next."

This letter unconsciously gives such a charming picture of the old statesman and his son—who was then twenty-three—that I must continue it:

[1] *Cambridge Modern History*, Vol. V, p. 94.
[2] Macaulay's *History of England*, Vol. III, pp. 507–9; ed. 1855.
[3] *B.M. Add. MSS.*, 22,919, f. 151.
[4] These words are in cypher.

" Thus farr my Father dictated to me, but hath been so often interrupted in it, and it is now late, and he is really in soe great torment [from the gout] that he is not able to doe any more ; he hath been ill these four dayes, so I hope the violence of his paine will be gone in a day or two."

Cornbury thereupon gives Downing a brief account of the doings of Parliament, and then, sleep pressing upon his youthful eyelids, or as he puts it, " being wery," ends.[1]

Meanwhile Downing on July 8 had written to Lord Clarendon, " I am in some hopes to finde out some of the excepted persons."[2] On July 15 he explains that he has talked to De Witt who had made difficulties, as the treaty of Alliance—which was eventually signed on September 4, 1662, and which expressly provided in a separate clause for the delivery of any Regicides who came to the United Provinces—was not then concluded. However, De Witt promised a warrant of arrest, at the same time agreeing with Downing that strict secrecy must be observed, and that when the opportunity came instant action for transport to England would be necessary : " that it might indeede make a little stirre and busling ; but when it was done it could not be undone." Downing then definitely asks for instructions. He adds that Dendy is at Rotterdam, he is in hopes of finding Corbet, and he hears that Okey and others are at Strasburg. It was, apparently, in answer to this letter that Clarendon told Downing to do all he could " to lay hands upon the rogues."[3]

Downing now employed all those talents for secret service which had made him so formidable as Scoutmaster General under Cromwell. He arranged with a Dutch friend of three of the Regicides—one Abraham Kicke—

[1] *B.M. Add. MSS.*, 22,919, f. 158–9.

[2] Lister's *Clarendon*, Vol. III, Letter LXXIII.

[3] Id., Vol. III, Letter LXXIV. See also Lord Clarendon's letter—Letter LXXX—to Downing of August 16, 1661, in Lister, approving of his secret arrangements. For the terms of the Treaty of 1662 see Dumont, *Corps Diplomatique*, VI, ii, pp. 422–7.

to play them false. For every betrayed Regicide he promised him £200, and he threatened, that unless Kicke exerted all his efforts to entrap them, he would ruin him with the King of England. Early in 1662 Kicke was able to report to Downing that certain Regicides would shortly arrive in Holland : in March Okey, Barkstead and Corbet came to Delft. Downing, armed with a warrant specially authorized by de Witt, seized the three miserable men with the aid of his own servants, had them imprisoned, and then, despite the manifest hostility of the magistrates of Delft, who desired to release the prisoners, he hurried them on board a ship named the *Blackmore* bound for England, in the dead of night.[1]

Downing in language of terrible vividness describes the actual capture at the house in Delft. He and his armed escort approached " and knocking at ye doore one of ye house came to see who it was and ye doore being open, the under Scout and ye whole company rushed immediately into ye house, and into ye roome were they were sitting by a fyere side with a pipe of tobacco and a cup of beere, immediately they started up to have gott out at a back Doore but

[1] See the excellent account in Japikse, *De Verwikkelingen*, etc., pp. 195–7, based mainly on the Clarendon Papers (Downing correspondence) in the Bodleian Library. Pepys gives the name of the ship, *Diary*, Vol. II, pp. 191 and 193, ed. 1923. Precisely why the three regicides left the safe security of Hanau in Germany to come to Holland remains a mystery. Downing in a letter to Secretary Nicholas dated March $\frac{17}{24}$, 1661/2, says the prisoners told their friends in Delft that they had come " to that place at that time to lay out ten thousand pound sterling there for ye setting up of severall manufactures for ye imployment of ye poor." *Egerton MSS.*, 2538, ff. 39–40. Wicquefort (*Histoire des Provinces Unies*, Tom. III, 77) says they had come to meet their wives. The account in *The Speeches*, etc., is much more vague, and assigns no particular reason. Ludlow (*Memoirs*, 1625–72, ed. by C. H. Firth, Vol. II, pp. 330–4) is not more specific. He denounces the " barbarous part " acted by the States in allowing Downing to take them. He correctly assigns the cause for this, i.e. that the Dutch were most anxious to conclude the Treaty of Alliance with England. It is clear that de Witt only sacrificed his Republican principles for this purpose with much searching of heart.

it was too late, ye Roome was in a moment fulle. They made many excuses, ye one to have gott liberty to have fetch[t] his coate and another to goe to privy but all in vayne. Corbet did not lodge in that house but had that night supped with Barkstead and a Candle was put into ye lanthorne to have lighted him home, soe had wee come a moment later hee had beene gone, and soe before I could have disposed of ye other two, would in all probability have gotten ye allarm but fynding hymselfe thus seized on, his body fell to purging upwards and downwards in ye very roome after a most strange manner." [1]

After a brief imprisonment in the Tower—where they arrived on March 16—Corbet, Okey and Barkstead were sentenced on April 16, and executed at Tyburn on the 19th.

A contemporary pamphlet of very considerable length describes the last days and hours of the three Regicides, together with " the unparalleled Treachery and Inhumanity exercised by Sir G. D. in decoying them to, and apprehending them at Delft." [2] This account is remarkable for many reasons. It is plainly composed by a Puritan of the extremest type, whose vitriolic hatred of the Restoration is apparent on every page that he writes. Fortunately most of the pages consist of the very noble Letters, dying Speeches and Prayers of the three Regicides themselves.

Describing the circumstances of the capture, the writer says that Colonel Okey was assured by Downing—whom he had sounded beforehand—that he would be as safe and free in Holland as he—Downing—was himself. " This Generous and Plain-hearted Colonel . . . did without the least Hesitation repose a great deal of Trust and con-

[1] *B.M. Egerton MSS.*, 2538, ff. 37–8 : letter to Nicholas dated March $\frac{7}{17}$, 1661/2.

[2] *The Speeches, Discourses and Prayers of Col. John Barkstead, Col. John Okey, and Mr. Miles Corbet, etc. . . . Printed in the year* 1662. The copy of this pamphlet in the B.M. is chaotically paginated : it purports to contain 71 pages, but really contains close on 100. The shorter account in *State Trials*, Vol. V, 1301–35, is based on this pamphlet.

fidence in one whom he had been instrumental to raise from the dust: little thinking that his New-England Tottered Chaplain whom he Cloathed and Fed at his table, and who dipped with him in his own dish, should prove like the Devil among the twelve to his Lord and Master."[1] After describing how "the Knight and his ruffianly crew" seized the Colonel and his companions and sent them to the Tower, the writer proceeds to put into the mouths of the Regicides a passionate defence of the Covenant, and a stinging attack on the Restoration state of England: "the Blasphemous, Obscene and Filthy Stage-Players"; in the streets "the many impudently Spotted, Painted Faces, and shamelessly, exposed nakedness"; as to the clergy, "did they [the people] ever dream of such grossly Ignorant, Lazy, Sottish, Debauched wretches to be put in places of preferment"; what about the encouragement of Priests and Jesuits, and what about the heavy taxes, and the bad state of trade? Were all these evils not the very things we fought against, and which, "while we were in power, could not break in upon us"? And now what a state of things! "What Chambering and Wantonness? What Riot and Excess? What Drinking and Whoring? What Swearing and Swaggering? What Gaming and Revelling? What Cursing and Damning? What Roaring and Ranting? What uncontrollable wickedness rageth everywhere through the Land." Oh! the state of "the poor Commons of England," now the prey of the rich! Oh, the travesty of Justice! But perhaps after all "*Sanguis Martyrum semen est, ut Ecclesiæ, sic et Reipublicæ.*"[2]

If this was really the spirit of the Regicides, the Government, who early in 1661 had experienced Venner's dangerous conspiracy—which for several days threw the whole city of London into confusion—and further plots in that year and in 1662,[3] can hardly be blamed for drastic action.

[1] *The Speeches*, etc., pp. 1–2. [2] Id., etc., pp. 4–12.

[3] Clarke's *Life of King James II*, Vol. I, pp. 388–91 and 396–7. See also Lister's *Clarendon*, Vol. II, passim, and Clarendon's *The Continuation*, pp. 134–8, ed. 1761.

For all the Republicans could do was to lead England into anarchy. They could not govern themselves, yet they had put every impediment in the way of Cromwell, who at least knew very well how to govern. And Okey, "generous and plain-hearted Colonel" though he may have been, had undoubtedly been one of the most implacable of the Republicans. Henry Cromwell, writing to Thurloe on February 10, 1657–8, vigorously denounces Okey, together with Harrison and Carey, for endeavouring "to disturb the peace of these nations"; he refers to "these incendiaries, which are certainly very dangerous, and of an inveterate temper."[1] It is also pertinent to remember that Algernon Sydney and Ludlow foregathered at Amsterdam to plot against their country in the summer of 1665, when England was at death-grips with the Dutch. Moreover, Algernon Sydney, many years later, abused the clemency of the King, who had allowed him to return to England, by receiving a large supply of French gold to assist him in his intrigues for the overthrow of the Government.[2]

But whatever had been the past, or might have been the future of Okey, Barkstead and Corbet, their manner of death was noble, and it is impossible to read their last letters, prayers and speeches without being deeply moved. To one who asked Okey "how he did" on his arrival at Tyburn, he said, "I bless the Lord, I am very well, and do no more value what I am now going about, than this straw (taking up a piece of straw in his hand). I have (sayes he) made many a Charge in my time, but now I have but one Charge more to make, and then I shall be at rest."[3] Old Miles Corbet, who was sixty-seven, gently separated himself from his weeping wife: "Truly Mol, thou wilt greatly engage my heart to thee, if thou now wilt willingly

[1] Thurloe, VI, 789–90.

[2] See Sir Charles Firth's account of Sydney (who, though not a Regicide, was a violent Republican in the *D.N.B.*, and Downing's letters to Clarendon of June 9 and 23, 1665 (Nos. CLXXIV and CLXXV), in Lister's *Clarendon*, Vol. III.

[3] *The Speeches*, etc., p. 38.

yield me up to God." [1] Colonel Barkstead was too weak to speak much at the last, but remembering, with remorse, his own harsh treatment of the Fifth Monarchy men when he was Governor of the Tower, he exhorted his hearers to toleration and to Christian amity.[2]

The speech of Colonel Okey is particularly notable. He expressed confidence that all the bloodshed in the Civil War would fructify into " another Resurrection " ;—in a letter to a friend written from prison he had rejoiced that he had engaged " in that *good old Cause*, which I am now to seal with my blood again, as I have many a time done." [3] On the other hand, he urged his friends to remain quiet, and not to pursue their ends " by any indirect and unjust ways," and he exhorted the soldiers and people to pray for the King's welfare. Finally, during all the time he had been a Major or Colonel, some sixteen years as near as he could reckon, he did not know whose ox or whose ass he had taken away. If he had wronged anyone, he prayed their forgiveness as for one " that had many failings." As to him " who formerly was my Chaplain, that did pursue me to the very death," and " all others upon the Earth, I forgive freely, as I desire the Lord to forgive me." [4]

This final reference by Colonel Okey to Downing, in its context, seems to suggest some particular reason for Downing's malignant pursuit. What the cause of difference was remains a mystery, but it is noteworthy that Colonel Okey had quarrelled also with one of Downing's successors as Chaplain in his regiment.

It appears that in 1649 Okey disapproved of the theological opinions held by some of his officers. In these views the officers were supported by the regimental Chaplain, Mr. Close. Thereupon Colonel Okey prepared to discharge the Chaplain ; then slightly relenting, said he could stay on as a Private Trooper. To this Mr. Close with great spirit replied that if he was not fit to be a Chaplain

[1] *The Speeches*, etc., p. 45—one of the interposed pages.
[2] Id., p. 59. [3] Id., pp. 53 and 40. [4] Id., p. 57.

he was not fit to ride in a troop of horse.[1] It is possible that Downing may have found Okey equally intractable.

Downing's seizure of the Regicides was greeted with great favour by the Government. The King was specially pleased, so was the Lord Chancellor, so was the Secretary of State, Sir William Morice. Sir William wrote thus on March 21, 1661–2 :

" We doe heere al magnify your diligente and prudente conduct in the seisinge and conveyinge over of the regicides, and we thinke few others would have used such dexterity, or would have compassed so difficult a busines." [2]

Pepys, who in his youth had been a passionate Cromwellian, and who had witnessed the execution of Charles I with much approval, took a different view. He describes how Mr. Coventry on March 12, 1661-2, brings them news of Sir George Downing's coup at Delft, and then the Diarist makes this comment in a parenthesis—" like a perfidious rogue, though the action is good and of service to the King, yet he cannot with any good conscience do it."

In estimating Downing's conduct in arresting the Regicides it is relevant to observe that no less than three eminent supporters of the Parliamentary cause, in days gone by, signed the Treaty with the Dutch of September 4, 1662, with its special clause about surrender of Regicides. These three were Monk, then Duke of Albemarle, Denzil Hollis, then Lord Hollis, and Ashley-Cooper, afterwards first Earl of Shaftesbury.[3]

[1] Firth's *Cromwell's Army*, pp. 327–8. See also pp. 313–27, for a full account of the place of the Chaplain in the Army at that time : 3rd ed., 1921.

[2] *B.M. Add. MSS.*, 22,919, f. 203. See also Japikse, *De Verwikkelingen, etc.*, p. 197.

[3] Dumont, *Corps Diplomatique*, VI, ii, 422–7.

CHAPTER NINE

THE CAUSES OF WAR : THE PRELUDE TO THAT OF 1665–7 AND THE PART THEREIN OF SIR GEORGE DOWNING

How prone are people tir'd with Peace,
To nauseate their happiness,
And headlong into mischief run,
To feed their foul ambition !
Leisure and luxury, when met
In populous cities, do beget
That monster War, which at the first,
In little private discords nurst,
Grows higher by degrees, until
Having got power to his will,
He breaks into a general flame,
Beyond what Polity can tame.

—CHARLES COTTON (1630–1687).[1]

A GREAT book has still to be written upon the Causes of War, a book which might be of some guidance to modern men groping their way with painful slowness, and constant stumblings, along the fun-ambulatory path of peace. Such a book awaits the pen, not of a pedant, or of a partisan,—whether Pacifist or Jingo—but of a philosopher-historian who is capable of extracting from the immense complexity of history certain central threads.

[1] See my edition of his *Poems*, p. 380 ; published by R. Cobden-Sanderson, 1923. This poem is one of the original choruses contributed by Cotton to his translation of Corneille's *Horace*, which he dedicated to his sister-in-law, Mrs. Stanhope Hutchinson, on November 7, 1665, from Beresford Hall, on the banks of the Dove. When he wrote this poem he was, therefore, no doubt thinking of the second Dutch War.

One fact at least is clear : the causes of war are labyrinthine, and are long in reaching their climax. The defenestration of Prague, the tea cargo cast into Boston Bay, the murder of Sarajevo, these are but the lightning flashes which suddenly reveal to men that the clouds have gathered, and that the sky is already dark.

Another fact is equally clear : nations which, though outwardly at peace, are secretly at deep enmity with one another, cannot hope to escape, sooner or later, from conflict, unless some Concert of Europe or League of Nations intervenes. In the absence of arbitration it is absolutely impossible for two hostile peoples to appreciate one another's point of view ; each hugs its wrongs, until the growing asperity of dispatches leads to the final ultimatum, and to the insolence of arms.

Just so long as men ignore these fundamental lessons of history, so long will wars be inevitable. To a generation which has hardly emerged from the European catastrophe 1914–18, and still more to the generation now beginning, an understanding of these things is of paramount importance. At the Peace of Versailles the fate of modern Europe was settled for good or for ill. From that palace of tremendous memories two ways branch off, and the modern pilgrim must choose along which he will make his progress. The direction of each is marked with the utmost plainness. One is the way which leads to Destruction through Hatred :

> " And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far
> Ancestral voices prophesying war ! "

And the other is the way to Justice through Arbitration, which is the way of the Peace-makers, and therefore of the Redeemer of Mankind :

> " For so the holy sages once did sing,
> That He our deadly forfeit should release,
> And with His Father work us a perpetual peace."

In the circumstances of the seventeenth century the Dutch War of 1665–7 was simply inevitable. The then

years from 1654 to 1664 were little more than an armed truce. The reader has already seen how bitter were the commercial relations between England and the United Provinces in the period preceding the Restoration. Independently of this the political relations were now to become specially exacerbated. This political complication arose out of the dynastic connection between the House of Orange and the House of Stuart. Mary, the eldest daughter of Charles I, had married William II, Prince of Orange. A week after the death of William II in November, 1650, the infant William III was born. The House of Orange was wonderfully loyal to the House of Stuart in its adversity, and the exiled Charles and James were constant visitors to their sister, the Princess Royal, though the lynx-eyed Downing, as has been seen, did what he could to impede these meetings. In the United Provinces there were two political parties—the majority party, those who passionately supported the House of Orange, to whose heroic leadership as Stadtholders through eighty years of struggle against Spain, the Provinces owed their independent existence; and the minority, but very powerful, party of the Burgher Aristocracy, whose primary interest was Commerce. Politically, this party was intensely jealous of the House of Orange, and, not without reason, dreaded its encroachments on Republican liberties. The death of William II and the infancy of William III meant for the Orange party not, indeed, political extinction, far from it, but political defeat. For the Burgher party had come under the guidance of a statesman of genius, Jan De Witt, and it was De Witt who was mainly responsible for concluding with Cromwell the peace of 1654—urgently necessary for the defeated Dutch. But that peace contained a secret clause which profoundly embittered the Orange party, and was pregnant with future mischief. This was the clause which undertook the exclusion of the Prince of Orange from the ancestral Stadtholdership and from military command. De Witt's part in this transaction is involved in clandestine chicane and trickery almost, if not quite, unparal-

leled even in the annals of seventeenth-century diplomacy.[1]

The method by which De Witt bartered away with Cromwell the birthright of the infant Prince, who was destined in the fulness of time to be the saviour of Europe, is not here, however, material. Nor is it necessary to discuss the Reasons of State—that this act was the purchase price of peace with Cromwell, and that it was a retaliation for the Orange *coup* at the Castle of Loevenstein in 1650, which can be submitted in justification of De Witt's action. The material point is the action itself, and the consequences of it when the Restoration of Charles II—the youthful Prince's uncle—took place.

As soon as De Witt saw that the Restoration of the House of Stuart was inevitable, he did all he could to undo the past, short of imperilling his own position and that of his party. Downing reported to Thurloe just before the Restoration—in the early spring of 1660—a cynical saying in Holland that "if the Devil rule in England, they must hold fair with him."[2] Accordingly De Witt, with great political sagacity, did all he could to propitiate Charles by expressions of friendship, and by sumptuous public entertainments at the Hague just before the Restoration. Some months later he induced the States of Holland to annul the Act of Exclusion (September, 1660), and to undertake the education of the youthful Prince of Orange. On the other hand, De Witt declined to restore the Prince to the ancestral offices—the Stadtholdership and the military commands. Charles was only partly propitiated, and the wrong done to the friendly House of Orange rankled, and could not be forgotten or ignored.[3] In a letter to Secretary Nicholas on August 29, 1662, Downing stated that the real bottom of all the "jarrings" which preceded the signature of the 1662

[1] For an account of the transaction see pp. 220–4, *History of Holland*, by George Edmundson, 1922. [2] Thurloe, VII, 874–7.

[3] For the general facts of the situation here summarized see G. Edmundson's *History of Holland*, chs. xiii, xiv and xv; Sir John Seeley's *The Growth of British Policy*, Vol. II, Parts III and IV; Ranke's *History of England*, Vol. III, pp. 417–18 and 425.

Treaty was the hostility of the De Witt party to the Prince of Orange, and their fear that Charles would unexpectedly interfere on his behalf.[1]

It is now necessary to hasten on, and, acting as ubiquitous spectators in London, at the Hague, at Paris, sometimes taking ship even to the Indian Ocean and the Spice Islands, to the Gold Coast of Africa and the shores of North America, to watch the inevitable march of events to the issue of war.

On the 8/18 June, 1661, as has been stated in a previous chapter, Sir George Downing was received in audience by the States General on taking up his ambassadorial post, and delivered a remarkable speech. He assured them of the goodwill of the King his Master, and of the value of that goodwill as of a powerful King supported by the unparalleled affection of his subjects. He referred hopefully to the Treaty of friendship then in course of negotiation between England and the United Provinces. He offered his mediation in the peace parleys between the United Provinces and Portugal. Finally he concluded his speech with these memorable words :

" I am perfectly of opinion that it is good for both that the Realms and Kingdomes of the King my Master and the United Provinces do remaine in a very good and cleare understanding and be instruments of good and not of hurt to each other, the interest of religion and neighbourhood seems to me strongly to require it, *and as to their trade and commerce the world is large, there is trade enough for both, and if there were not, I do not see how it would be made more or more safe by their misunderstanding.*"

The last words of this speech (the italics are mine) call for particular attention. " Golden words," says a Dutch historian somewhat satirically of them.[2] In view of events to follow—and even then taking place—certainly the

[1] *B.M. Egerton MSS.*, 2538, ff. 120–3.

[2] " Gulden woorden waren het, maar wat moet de spreker zelf, wat moeten de omstanders vooral bij het hooren van het laatste gedacht hebben ? " —Japikse, *De Verwikkelingen*, etc., p. 120. Downing's speech itself will be found in an Appendix (No. V) to Japikse's excellent book, pp. ix–x.

words have now a somewhat hollow ring. But whether they were, or were not, sincere at the time is not the main interest of them. That interest consists in this, that almost certainly no other contemporary of Downing would have dreamed of giving utterance to such an idea. It is the New England, the American voice, calling even then to the Old World, and proclaiming an axiom of political wisdom which was found at the time to be unrealizable, and even to-day has by no means been fully apprehended. It is, indeed, an extraordinary tribute to Downing's modernity of mind that his great contemporary, Sir William Temple, famed in his own day and afterwards for political sagacity, should be found enunciating a precisely opposite opinion—"... there seem to be grown too many traders for trade in the world, so as they can hardly live one by another."[1]

Even before he delivered his speech Downing had set to work. He discovered that in the negotiations between the Portuguese Ambassador and De Witt certain clauses in the draft Treaty, which was on the point of signature, were contrary to, and actually annulled, certain advantages enjoyed by English Merchants from the Treaty concluded some years before between Portugal and Cromwell. Downing at once protested to the Portuguese Ambassador, and by the vigour and truculence of his representations prevented the signature of the Treaty until a clause had been inserted to the effect that, if the Dutch-Portuguese Treaty contained anything contrary to the Cromwellian Treaty it should be inoperative. The Treaty was thereupon signed (August 6, 1661), but its formal ratification by Portugal was delayed till December, 1662, owing largely to the desire of the English Government, inspired by Downing, to safeguard even more securely English Mercantile interests.[2]

[1] Sir William Temple's *Observations upon the United Provinces*, p. 200, in the collected 1770 edition of his Works.

[2] For details of the Portuguese complication see the correspondence which passed between Downing and Clarendon between June, 1661 and February, 1662, as printed by Lister in his *Life of Clarendon*, Vol. III, pp. 134–190, from the originals in the Bodleian Library.

See also Pontalis, *De Witt*, Tom. I, pp. 280–281.

Downing had been able to browbeat the Portuguese Ambassador in this matter because of the projected marriage between Charles II and Catherine of Braganza, a marriage which the Portuguese contemplated with delight as bringing them the powerful friendship of England. On the other hand, the Portuguese could not risk the abrupt breaking off of negotiations with their ancestral and powerful enemies the Dutch, nor could the English Government contemplate a renewal of the war between the Dutch and Portugal at the very moment when the King was taking to himself a Portuguese wife with an immensely wealthy dowry. Lord Clarendon, therefore, in answer to Downing's polemical letters, urged the necessity of a more pacific attitude. "You must," said the wise old statesman, in a letter dated November 9, 1661, "sett all your witts on worke to prevent this warr [between Portugal and the Dutch] wch will produce a thousand mischieves in wch the Dutch will undergo their full share."[1] Clearly, Clarendon, who was at once Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary, could—quite apart from his native sagacity—take a less insular view than Downing. Nevertheless, in justice to Downing, it must be stated that he knew far more about commerce than Clarendon, that the Dutch were infinitely more powerful commercially than the English at this time, and in the circumstances it was obviously desirable that any trading privileges enjoyed by English merchants should be retained, and if possible, improved.[2]

De Witt bears indirect testimony to Downing's zeal and its embarrassing consequences, for the Dutch Commissioners who had tried to arrange secret conferences with the Portuguese Ambassador, with the object of presenting Downing with a *fait accompli*. But the Portuguese Ambassador was too frightened of the "fearful gentleman" to agree to this course. Downing insisted on being present

[1] Lister's *Clarendon*, Vol. III, Letter LXXXV.

[2] See specially Downing's letters LXXI and LXXIV in Lister's *Clarendon*, Vol. III.

and was able to hold up the Treaty at the first Conference.[1]

Fortunately war between Portugal and the Dutch was not renewed, and in May, 1662, Charles II's Bride reached English shores bringing with her, in laden ships, a picturesque dowry—incredible quantities of "sugars," plate, and jewels together with a Portuguese Jew to negotiate the bills of exchange.[2] Her dowry included also territorial possessions Tangier, and more important still, Bombay.

In the vexed question of the restoration of the Prince of Orange to his ancestral dignities, Clarendon, it must be admitted, also took a more statesmanlike course than Downing. On June 21/July 1, 1661, Downing wrote to Clarendon reporting that De Witt steadfastly opposed restitution. But "I know the length of De Witt's foote, he is cunning and he is bold, if he see any hopes of carrying on w^t^ he aymes at." Downing, however, hopes to bring De Witt to another mind, without "running the king into the danger of a warre." Firm measures are necessary with the Dutch, this is Downing's constant theme. A settlement between England and the Dutch without stipulating for the Prince of Orange's restitution—an interest of great importance to England—will be disastrous to the Prince of Orange.[3]

Clarendon's reply to these and similar representations was notable. "I pray," he wrote to Downing on August 16, 1661, "upon what grounds, in reason or policy, can the Kinge, in the renewinge a league with the States Generall, demande that they should choose a Generall of his recommendacon? and what harangues would De Witt make upon that subject, that the King of England will not make a peace with them excepte he may give them a Generall, Admiral, and Stateholder, who must always remember to whom he owes his benefit?" In Clarendon's view the

[1] *Lettres et Négociations entre M. Jean de Witt*, etc., Tom. II, 132–5, also p. 153.

[2] See Lord Sandwich's letter to Lord Clarendon, Letter XCIV in Lister's *Clarendon*, Vol. III. Lord Sandwich commanded the fleet which brought Catherine to England.

[3] Japikse's *De Verwikkelingen*, etc., Appendix, pp. xxi–iii.

general Treaty between England and the Dutch must first be concluded, then the English Government could intervene more effectively for the Prince of Orange. Incidentally they could then expose De Witt by complaining, " of all those fowle arts used for the procuringe the act of seclusion."[1]

Downing found that De Witt was adamant in his refusal to consider restoration of the Prince of Orange to the stadtholderate and military commands. De Witt had spoken strongly about it, " very plaine dealing " as Downing describes it in a letter to Clarendon of September 16, 1661.[2] Clarendon replied that he was heartily glad Downing had now come round to his view that the Treaty must first be concluded before the Prince of Orange business was broached. As soon as the Treaty was concluded they must lose no time " in fallinge roundly upon that affayre."[3] How vexed was this whole Orange business even in its smaller ramifications may be seen from the fact that a too active interference by Charles II—who since the death of the Princess Royal in December, 1660, had been the Prince's guardian, in the Prince's upbringing led to the States of Holland, on September 30, 1661, renouncing their part in the surveillance of his education.[4]

While these political difficulties and misunderstandings show how unfriendly were the relations between the two countries, they were exacerbated by the commercial question. Nevertheless, despite hostile and suspicious feelings, the English and Dutch Commissioners who were negotiating a Treaty in London laboured at their arduous task.

The Dutch Commissioners in London acted under instructions from De Witt at the Hague, for De Witt domin-

[1] Lister's *Clarendon*, Vol. III, Letter LXXX.

[2] Japikse, *De Verwikkelingen*, etc., Appendix, p. xxiii.

[3] Id., Appendix, pp. xxii–iii. See also Appendix, pp. xxxiii–iv, for correspondence between Clarendon and Downing as to De Witt's part in the Seclusion business of 1654. From this it appears that written evidence was difficult to come by as De Witt had burnt all incriminating material.

[4] Pontalis, *De Witt*, Tom. I, 272–6. Also Lister's *Clarendon*, Vol. III, Letter LXXIV, p. 155.

ated the foreign as he dominated the domestic policy of the United Provinces. Hence Downing played a very important part, for he had to wrestle with the most astute statesman in Europe, who was supported in all commercial questions by the power of the great Dutch trading companies. The Dutch East and West India companies were, indeed, not merely commercial, but sovereign units with Governor- or Director-Generals controlling in India, in South and North America and in Africa immense enterprises, not only of commerce but of settlement. Military forces protected the existing settlements and conquered others, while naval armaments guarded the magnificent mercantile fleets which brought the wealth of the world, precious stones, Indian spices, and Persian silks to Amsterdam, and other Dutch ports.

The great historian Ranke thus sums up the commercial power of the Dutch Republic at this time : " In Flushing the West Indian, in Amsterdam the East Indian trade of Europe seemed almost to centralize. Dort and Rotterdam were enlivened by the Anglo-Scottish trade, Enkhuypen by the herring-fisheries, Saardam by ship-building. The East India Company formed, as it were, a republic which stood forth as a sovereign power. On the goods brought in its ships depended the trade with Southern, as well as with Northern Europe, and with Germany." [1]

Among the thorny questions which were agitated by the Commissioners in London, and by De Witt and Downing at the Hague were these : the English claim that Dutch ships should salute the English flag in British seas ; the English claim that the Dutch should not enjoy free fishing within ten leagues of English shores ; the question of mutual compensation for wrongs done before a certain date, and when that date should be fixed ; the question of how disputes should be settled which arose after that date and up to the date of the signature of the Treaty ; the

[1] Ranke's *History of England*, Vol. III, p. 417. I find that Ranke follows almost verbally here the description of Sir William Temple, *Observations upon the United Provinces*, p. 192, 1770 ed. of Temple's *Works*.

question of how best to avoid war-like acts in respect of mutual wrongs which might arise after the signature of the Treaty.

It is necessary to glance rapidly at each of these points, which, though in theory settled by the September Treaty of 1662 were not settled in such a way as to stave off war two years later.

The claim that Dutch ships should salute the English flag in British seas was of very long standing, and had been explicitly acknowledged by the Dutch in the Peace with Cromwell in 1654. The claim to exact a toll from Dutch vessels fishing in British waters was also of long standing, and this in the Cromwellian Treaty of 1654 had been settled in favour of the Dutch, who were not required to pay a toll.

The English Commissioners were against concession of free fishing on English Coasts in the new Treaty ; but to the Dutch the point was vital, as a great part of their wealth came from their fishing trade. Finally they induced Louis XIV to agree, in the Treaty which they were concurrently making with him, to a mutual guarantee of free fishing against molesters. The English had, therefore, to concede this point : they could not risk a war with France and Holland.[1]

" I told Downing," wrote De Witt to Beverning on June 24, 1661, " that rather than recognize this imaginary sovereignty on the seas, or before receiving, as a concession from the English, the liberty of navigation and fishing which belongs to us by natural right and the law of nations, we would rather shed the last drop of our blood."[2] This was certainly very plain dealing ; on the other hand it was also, perhaps, what Downing sardonically described on another occasion as " huffing and puffing," for though England continued to concede free fishing, the Dutch continued to concede the salute.[3]

[1] T. W. Fulton, *The Sovereignty of the Sea*, pp. 449–55.
[2] Pontalis, *De Witt*, Tom. I, 278–9, also Fulton as in preceding footnote.
[3] See the terms of the Treaty in Dumont, *Corps Diplomatique*, VI, ii, pp. 422–7.

The question of mutual compensation for wrongs was an exceedingly thorny one. In the first place, it was obviously necessary to agree upon a given time before which mutual claims should be regarded as dormant, otherwise the Treaty would never have been concluded. For it must be remembered that the rivalries and wrongs of the two Nations long preceded the first Dutch War, and stretched back over a period of more than half a century. It was finally agreed that wrongs committed in the East Indies and reported in London before the $\frac{10}{20}$ January, 1659, should be wiped out, and that the corresponding date for the wrongs committed in Europe or in other parts of the world should be $\frac{4}{14}$ March, 1654. Downing fought for the fixing of an earlier date in the case of India—"the suffering of the English being most considerable in those parts and the loss of that trade being at the stake if not vigorously incouraged and protected."[1] On the other hand, owing to the vigour of Downing's action as Resident at the Hague from 1658–9, as has been seen, the Dutch had already given very considerable compensation for damage done to British ships in Indian waters. Moreover, the rich spice island of Poleron or Poeloe-Rum in the Moluccas, which Downing with incomparable sarcasm observed later, "hath been a-restoring by them ever since the year 1622,"[2] was now to be restored by the Dutch. That it was not, in the end, restored, despite the Treaty undertaking was one of the causes of the coming war.

Then there was the question of compensation for wrongs done after the datum period and before the signature of the Treaty now in course of negotiation, and specially the method of adjudicating on those wrongs. Downing here was insistent, and rightly insistent, that these disputes must be settled by Special Commissioners, and must not be left to the Admiralty Courts. "I was when I was formerlie

[1] Japikse, *De Verwikkelingen*, etc., Appendix, p. xxix: Letter to Clarendon, May 24, 1662.

[2] See the pamphlet *A Discourse written by Sir George Downing*, etc., referred to at the end of the following chapter.

heere about a whole twelve Month, before I could gett the better of their Admties and bring them to end things with mee by Commrs, but haveinge once gott the better all things were ever after carried very fairly with mee and the English had good justice by orders of State and now they would bring things back to the old way againe, but I will perish eare ever to suffer so great a mischeefe and dishonour to his Majtie and his subjects." Thus wrote Downing to Secretary Nicholas on December 16, 1661. And again, writing to Nicholas on January 17, 1661–2, he says : " give me leave to tell you that not any Admty of the United Provinces ever did or ever will . . . give sentence for any English man against a private man of war in such a case," i.e. of piracy, and he refers to his experience in Cromwell's time.[1] The point of Commissioners was won by Downing, and was incorporated in the Treaty. Damages committed after the datum period and up to the time of signature of the Treaty were to be arbitrated upon by Commissioners appointed by each nation. The Commissioners were to allow a year to elapse so as to enable mutual agreements to be made out of court ; thereafter they were to adjudicate on any claims left over.[2]

The question of wrongs which might arise after the signature of the Treaty was settled thus. If the wrongs were committed in any area or sea on this side the Cape of Good Hope justice was to be done upon the offenders, and satisfaction rendered, within twelve months of complaint ; if beyond the Cape of Good Hope, then within eighteen months.[3]

Finally it is necessary to mention a bone of bitter and peculiar contention which was long agitated before the Treaty was signed. This was the case of two English

[1] See the letters to Nicholas in Japikse, *De Verwikkelingen*, etc., Appendix p. xxv, see also pp. xxiv and xxviii. Also Lister's *Clarendon*, Vol. III Letters LXXXIII and LXXXVIII.

[2] Dumont, *Corps Diplomatique*, VI, ii, pp. 422–7, see Clause XV.

[3] Id., Clause XIV.

ships, the *Bona Esperanza* and the *Bona Aventura* which had been seized by the Dutch in 1643. The Dutch claimed that they had paid compensation for these ships in 1649. The English claimed that, if so, the Dutch had compensated the wrong persons, as the rightful heirs at law to the claim had received not a penny, and insisted on proper compensation.[1] After prolonged controversy the two ships were, in the Treaty, excepted from the pre-datum category, and it was agreed that the complainants should still be able to pursue their claim [2] despite its hoary age. The excepting clause was so phrased as to leave vague the method by which the complainants were to proceed, that is to say, whether they were to proceed through the ordinary avenue of the Dutch law-courts, or through special diplomatic intervention undertaken by the English Government on their behalf. The English Government all along meant the latter, the Dutch the former method. The device of vagueness was adopted in order to save the Treaty from shipwreck, for neither side would have accepted the other side's meaning in black and white.[3] The Treaty had not been signed a year when the precise meaning of this clause became the subject of renewed and passionate controversy. Yet neither the claim nor the clause were, in themselves, of any importance. They were, in effect, important historically, simply as indicating intense national feeling cloaked beneath pretended amity.

Such were the principal clauses of the Treaty—the

[1] For a fuller account of this matter see Lister's account in his *Life of Clarendon*, Vol. II, pp. 246–51.

[2] The actual Latin phrase in the Treaty was "litem inceptam prosequi."

[3] See Downing's letter in Lister's *Clarendon*, Vol. III, Letter CXLVIII, and Japikse, *De Verwikkelingen*, etc., pp. 216–24; also Appendix, pp. xxxii–iii, for Downing's letter of August 29, 1662, to Clarendon describing the final wrangle and agreement between him and De Witt. The letter ends: "So God give a good issue, I am weary to extremity." See also p. xxvii (Japikse) for the King's letter of March 24, 1661–2, instructing Downing to push the claim, and *Lettres et Négociations entre M. Jean De Witt*, etc., Tom. II, pp. 403–4, a letter of De Witt to Boreel of August 24, 1662, giving his view of the case of the two ships.

Regicides clause has been dealt with in a previous chapter —which was at length signed at Westminster on September $\frac{4}{14}$, 1662.

Had there been any disposition to friendliness in the two nations, the Treaty was sufficiently specific and sensible in its main provisions to prevent them from drifting into conflict. But that fundamental disposition was lacking. The animosity of generations could not, it seemed, be mitigated save by mutual experience of the suffering and inefficacy of war. "The downe right truth is they would make the King, as some of them have not stuck to say, Roy Carel Roy Des Cartes, and noe sooner is one blynde story over, presently another is broached to keep down his Maties reputation." So Downing wrote to Secretary Nicholas on December 23, 1661.[1] And a week earlier he had written: "Compliments signifie nothing heere but resolutions and letting them see that you are in such a posture that if they will not doe the King right hee will doe himselfe right."[2]

If this was the attitude of the two nations in words, their attitude in deeds was not different. Among the Downing correspondence in the British Museum is a letter to Downing from Secretary Nicholas dated August 16, 1661, describing, without emotion, how a British Customs "Chaloupe," plying on the Sussex coast off Rye, to stop the export of wool and other commodities prohibited by law, had been seized by a Dutch vessel, the captain and crew beaten and very ill used, and taken off to Zeeland. Since which time there had been much smuggling out of Wool and smuggling in of Linnen, etc., to the damage of his Majesty. His Majesty therefore had ordered the Duke of York to retaliate by seizing the first Dutch man-of-war that came into these parts. This had been done, and restitution thereof is being made on the undertaking of the Dutch Ambassador that the British "Chaloupe"

[1] Japikse, *De Verwikkelingen*, etc., p. 181, footnote.
[2] Id., Appendix, p. xxv.

shall be restored in good condition, and just reparation made to the master and mariners.[1]

Hardly a year later, the English, at the request of the Agent of the Cardinal Prince of Hesse, the Grand Prior of the Order of the Knights of Malta who were bickering with the Dutch, arrested some Dutch ships. There was bitter outcry in Holland at this eccentric proceeding, which was not authorized by the Government. Charles II personally intervened, and caused the ships to be restored. Even Downing appears to have been less ferocious than usual on this occasion. De Witt, writing to Boreel on June 29, 1662, refers to this affair : " Nous esperons de la bonne conduite du Roi de la Grande Bretagne et de son affection pour notre République, qu'il réprimera peu à peu les insolences de cette Nation, qui deviennent insupportables." He goes on to refer to the " impertient " complaints made from time to time to their High Mightinesses —this was a shaft at Downing,—he speaks of " the unjust conduct of this Nation " (England), and again of " the palpable injustice of the English." [2]

Considering the state of feeling on either side, it is remarkable that the Treaty was ever signed. The truth was that neither Nation wanted war—Nations never really do when it comes to the point—but both, for particular reasons, were swept by gusts of passion from time to time. The Treaty allayed these gusts for a brief space. Then illegitimate deeds on either side let loose the gusts again ; these gathered force, and before both Nations were fully conscious of reality, they found themselves hurried resistlessly along into the whirlwind of war.

[1] *B.M. Add. MSS.*, 22,919, f. 162.

[2] *Lettres et Négociations entre M. Jean De Witt*, etc., Tom. II, pp. 361–4 and 367–8. Also Japikse, *De Verwikkelingen*, etc., Appendix, pp. xxix–xxx.

CHAPTER TEN

THE IMMEDIATE CAUSES : SOME INCIDENTS LIGHT AND DARK, AND DOWNING'S PART IN THEM

Now the storm begins to lower,
Haste the loom of hell prepare,
Iron-sheet of arrowy shower
Hurtles in the darken'd air.

Glitt'ring lances are the loom,
Where the dusky warp we strain,
Weaving many a soldier's doom,
Orkney's woe, and Randver's bane.

—GRAY : *The Fatal Sisters.*

SHORTLY after the Treaty had been signed Sir George Downing was summoned by Secretary Morris to return to England, to report on affairs in the United Provinces, and to advise on matters pursuant to the Treaty.[1] Accordingly in October Downing left the Hague, to which he did not return for nearly a year. He brought with him a letter dated October 13, 1662, from De Witt to Clarendon, in which De Witt congratulated the great English Minister on the completion of the Treaty, and it was certainly true that nothing but Clarendon's pacific policy during the negotiations could have carried it through.[2] The letter also contained a compliment to Downing :

" Il a beaucoup d'esprit, et, étant homme d'honneur et ministre très capable, il rendra ce témoignage à la vérité [i.e. of De Witt's

[1] *B.M. Add. MSS.*, 22,919, f. 246.
[2] See the letters to Downing from Clarendon in Lister's *Clarendon*, Vol. III, passim.

sincerity in the matter of peace] et ne manquera pas de donner ses soins à ce que le nœud de l'amitié, entre le roi son maître et cette république, laquelle aura toujours des considérations toutes particulières et respectueuses pour sa Majesté, soit serré, en sorte qu'il soit indissoluble." [1]

How Downing employed himself during his stay in England is not precisely known. It is difficult, however, to believe that he did a great deal towards promoting feelings of indissoluble friendship between the two Nations. His correspondence in the British Museum contains various letters from English merchants at this time submitting grievances against their ancestral enemies the Dutch, which the businesslike Downing notes were delivered on such and such a day at his house in Stephen's Court in London, or at his house at East Hatley, in Cambridgeshire.[2]

Lord Clarendon says that Downing in the House of Commons—he represented Morpeth in the Parliaments of Charles II's reign—" took all Opportunities to inveigh against their [the Dutch] Usurpation in Trade ; and either did or pretended to know many of their Mysteries of Iniquity, in opening of which He rendered himself acceptable to the House, though He was a voluminous Speaker, which naturally They do not like." [3] Lord Clarendon does not mention particular dates, but he may have had this interval in mind. However this may be, in fairness to Downing it must be explained that Lord Clarendon intensely disliked him : "a Man of an obscure Birth," he says, "and more obscure Education which He had received in Part in New England . . . a Man of a proud and insolent Spirit, and who would add to any imperious Command of his somewhat of the Bitterness of his own Spirit." [4] Part of this was true ; at the same time Clarendon was too old-fashioned to be capable of

[1] *Correspondence Française du Grand Pensionaire, etc., publiée par M. François Combes*, Tom. I, pp. 222–3.

[2] *B.M. Add. MSS.*, 22,920, ff. 6 and 7.

[3] Clarendon's *Continuation*, Vol. II, p. 426, ed. 1761.

[4] Id., p. 423.

doing justice to Downing's originality of mind, as will be seen hereafter in the matter of National Finance. Moreover, Downing knew far more about the Dutch than Clarendon, and far more about trade ; he had had prolonged experience of Dutch diplomatic methods, which, if no harsher expression be justified, certainly entitled them to the premier place among " stone-wallers." Of their commercial methods some extremely trying manifestations were now to be experienced by English merchants.

In the autumn of 1662, the two great Dutch trading companies in East and West, in the Indian Ocean, and upon the coasts of Africa, devised a very effective means of preventing the expansion of British trade. Under the pretext that they were at war with Indian and African native potentates upon the coasts of Travancore, and of Guinea, they forcibly prevented British ships,—in African waters the *Charles*, *James* and other ships, in Indian waters the *Hopewell* and the *Leopard*,—from trading with the alleged enemy. It was many months before the news of these remarkable exploits reached England, and it was not till Downing had returned to the Hague in September, 1663, that very vigorous protests were addressed to the Dutch Government on the subject. In a series of powerful memorials and extraordinarily vigorous and able protests face to face with the merchant princes of the Dutch companies and their legal advisers, Downing beat down their flimsy pretexts. After eight months of argument the Dutch talked of restitution.[1]

But the time for diplomacy had in reality already passed. The ever-smouldering embers of animosity broke into flame and destroyed the patient structure of the Treaty. While Downing was fighting with words at the Hague, the Duke of York borrowed two war-ships from the King and dispatched Sir Robert Holmes to the coast of Guinea

[1] See Downing's Letters CXLV and CXLIX in Lister's *Clarendon*, Vol. III, also Letters CXXVIII, CXXXV and CXXXVIII, and generally the correspondence therein at this time. Clarendon's *Continuation*, Vol. II, pp. 427–8. *B.M. Add. MSS.*, 20,920, ff. 13–14.

in October, 1663. Thereafter, in the late spring of 1664, he sent a similar expedition under Colonel Richard Nicholas to North America. Holmes captured all the Dutch settlements and much shipping on the coast of Guinea, and Nicholas captured New Amsterdam, re-naming it New York after the Duke.[1]

That Downing thoroughly approved of these methods, which were entirely contrary to the Treaty, cannot be doubted. On the 18th September, 1663, he writes to Clarendon :

" I am sure this mealie way [of words] is not ye meanes to hinder a warre between England and this country, but ye most certaine and undoubted way to bring it on, making them so farr to presume as (as you finde) to add one injury to another ; and believe it, ye more they may, ye more they will. Whereas, on the other side, pay them in their own kind, and set their subjects a crying as well as his Maties, and you will have a very faire correspondence, and they will take heed what they doe ; and his Matie shall be as much hon^rd^ and loved here as he hath been despised : for they love nor hon^r^ none but them that they think both can and dare bite them." [2]

Again, a week earlier, to Joseph Williamson, Lord Arlington's secretary :

" What ever injuries the Dutch doe them [the Royal African Company founded by the Duke of York], let them be sure to doe the Dutch still greater and lett me alone to mediate between them, but without this, all other way will signifie not a rush . . ." [3]

Though rumours of some of Holmes's exploits appear to have reached Europe in May, 1664, the full story of his captures on the coast of Guinea was not received at the Hague till July.[4]

Until the news of the Guinea exploits had reached the

[1] The Duke of York had all along desired war. See his own very frank account of these transactions in *The Life of King James II*, by J. S. Clarke, Vol. I, pp. 399–404. For an account of Holmes see *D.N.B.*

[2] Letter CXXV, Lister's *Clarendon*, Vol. III.

[3] Japikse, *De Verwikkelingen*, etc., p. 283, footnote.

[4] Id., pp. 346–8.

Hague there seemed some prospect that the Dutch would be more accommodating, than they had hitherto been, in the settlement of commercial grievances.

In May, 1664, they promised—or rather indicated conditionally—restitution for the English ships wrongfully prevented from trading in Africa and India ; and, earlier, in April, De Witt and Downing, in a very friendly meeting, had agreed that the best way of avoiding commercial disputes in future would be for " a règlement " to be mutually drawn up laying down general conditions for the conduct of trade in the East Indies and in Africa ;[1] " so that yor Lopp. [Lordship, i.e. Clarendon] may see "—as Downing observed—" this heavy dull body doth begin to stirre at last." The Dutch were, in fact, much alarmed by the action of the English Parliament which, in April, 1664, vigorously endorsed the accumulated complaints of the Turkey, the East India and the Royal African Companies, and urged the King " to take some speedy and effectual means " for the redress of past wrongs, and for future prevention of Dutch " obstruction of our foreign trade." Both the King and Clarendon were still disposed to peace—officially they knew nothing of the Duke of York's orders to Holmes, the Guinea enterprise being the secret and private affair of the Duke—and they still hoped that diplomacy would bring the Dutch to reason.

But just as the Dutch action in preventing English ships from trading on the Gold Coast, and on the coast of Travancore, had led to the Holmes expedition, so the Holmes expedition now led to retaliation by the Dutch.

It was essential that profound secrecy should be observed at the Hague if the retaliatory blow was to be really effective. Yet how could the Dutch elude the lynx-eye of that " fearful gentleman " Downing ? But De Witt was equal to the occasion, and surpassed, certainly deceived, the late Scoutmaster-General himself. It was decided that expeditious and drastic vengeance could be most effectively

[1] Lister's *Clarendon*, Vol. III, Letters CXLV and CXLIX, and Japikse, *De Verwikkelingen*, etc., Appendix, pp. xlvi–vii.

accomplished by the great Admiral de Ruyter, who was to proceed to Guinea, recover the lost posts, and wreak vengeance on the English. Now De Ruyter was at this time in the Mediterranean, co-operating with the English Admiral Sir John Lawson, in measures against the Infidel Pirates—Barbary Corsairs—who infested that sea. The question was, how with their cumbrous machinery of government and administration could the Dutch convey the requisite order in absolute secrecy to De Ruyter? For any order of importance to an Admiral had to receive the sanction of the States General. At the same time it was necessary to lull the English Government into a false sense of security, and to throw dust in their eyes.

The Dutch plan was a marvel of ingenuity. Two Resolutions were prepared. The first—the dust-throwing Resolution—directed that a small force of twelve ships should be made ready in due course to sail under Van Campen with a view to repairing the damage done by Holmes. The English Government objected to this project, for Holmes's action in Guinea had not been sanctioned by the King, and Holmes was, indeed, consigned to the Tower as soon as he returned. But, in any case, Van Campen would not be able to sail without the knowledge of the English Government, who had to retain an adequate fleet in home waters to watch his movements.

This was the real object of the first Resolution: while the English gaze was directed towards the Zuyder Zee, De Ruyter would quietly sail out of the Mediterranean on his devastating voyage to the Gold Coast.

With the first Resolution Downing, as was intended, at once became acquainted. It was passed by the States General on August 9. Meanwhile the States of Holland in secret session had, on August 7, instructed their Deputies in the States General to promote action so that De Ruyter should be sent on the mission of vengeance to Guinea. Thereupon De Witt and certain select colleagues, who formed an inner Cabinet, arranged to put this instruction of the States of Holland into the form of a second Resolu-

tion for approval by the States General. The difficulty was that the sessions of the States General were not usually secret, and, in any case, a number of the Deputies could not be trusted. Accordingly a wonderful device—of which the ingenuity must still cause Posterity delighted laughter —was adopted by De Witt and his colleagues. The plotters waited for a day or two till the President of the Assembly for the week was a solemn Dutchman, who in private life had been a surgeon, and who was not too well acquainted with the character and procedure of public business. Then on Monday, August 11, the Secretary of the Assembly, who was in the plot, proceeded to read to the Assembly a general report on De Ruyter's activities in the Mediterranean. Tacked on to the end of this report was the second Resolution, ordering De Ruyter to Guinea, which the Secretary read with great rapidity, and in such a way as to convey the impression that he was simply reading over again the first Resolution taken on Saturday, August 9, of which a second reading was required. While he was reading, the other plotters engaged the Deputies who were not in the secret in conversation, so that the promiscuous murmur—which is not unknown even to-day in the most august of Assemblies—added inaudibility to the Secretary's rapid reading of deliberately confused matter. Thus the innocent President and Deputies were deceived, and passed the second Resolution under the impression that it was merely the first over again. One more difficulty had to be surmounted. The first Resolution had to be formally signed by the President of the preceding week, a man who was not specially friendly to the De Witt party, and who, though approving of the first Resolution, would most probably not have approved of the second. Nevertheless, somehow or other, the second Resolution must also be signed at once. The plotters, therefore, antedated the second Resolution so as to make it correspond in date with the first Resolution, and then combined the two. The unsuspecting President, believing he was simply signing the first Resolution,

appended his signature to the double document in the midst of a multitude of other papers.[1]

For once in his life, at least, Sir George Downing was completely deceived. It is true that in September, a month after the dispatch of the order to De Ruyter, the ear of the English Ambassador, which was ever close to the ground, caught rumours from Amsterdam as to De Ruyter's movements, which made him uneasy. He at once wrote to Clarendon and Secretary Bennet apprising them of these rumours. He did not, he said, believe them, for certainly no deliberation or resolution about such a matter had been taken by the Estates. Still he was doubtful of De Witt—"upon an exigent he will pass ordinary rules," and Downing feels that he himself would do likewise were he in the same case. Therefore let Sir John Lawson watch De Ruyter, and be ready for any emergency without waiting for orders, and let all the Consuls also be told to have an eye on De Ruyter's motions. For his part Downing loves "sure work." A little banging will make them tame. But if by any chance the Dutch should get the better, "they would be hygh above the skyes."[2]

Even if the English Government could act on a mere rumour which Downing himself disbelieved, a month had been lost and could not possibly be recovered. Downing had the temerity to ask De Witt point-blank about the De Ruyter rumours, but De Witt made answer to the effect that neither the States of Holland nor the Admiralty had given orders which could cause the King of England

[1] For the various aspects of this extraordinary transaction see Wicquefort, *Histoire des Provinces Unies*, Tom. III, pp. 135–7, and footnote; Pontalis, *De Witt*, Tom. I, pp. 328–30; Clarendon's *Continuation*, Vol. II, pp. 430–1. See also the interesting letter of Wicquefort to the King of Denmark, dated November 15, 1664, published by Dr. H. T. Colenbrander in *Bescheiden uit Vreemde Archieven omtrent De Groote Nederlandsche Zeeoorlogen*, 1652–1676, Vol. I, pp. 140–2.

[2] See Letter CLVI, in Lister's *Clarendon*, Vol. III, and specially the new extracts from letters of Downing to Secretary Bennet published by Japikse, *De Verwikkelingen*, Appendix, pp. xlix–l. Downing wrote several letters in September, 1664, on this matter, and I have combined points from them

umbrage. As for the States General, Downing had sufficient penetration to know quite well what went on in that Assembly. This reply was a masterpiece of satirical evasion, for it was true that neither the Estates of Holland nor the Admiralty could give an executive instruction ; only the States General could do that.

Wicquefort, the contemporary Dutch historian, and friend of De Witt, rejoices in the verbal truth of this reply, explaining that De Witt " qui ne trompa jamais personne, et qui estoit incapable d'une fourberie, avoit aussy une prudence qui ne laissoit pas facilement surprendre." Truly both the answer of the statesman, and the comment of the historian, throw a shaft of light on Dutch psychology in the seventeenth century.[1]

Not until the end of October were the English Goverment quite certain that they had been deceived by the Dutch, and that De Ruyter had gone to Guinea. Then early in December Downing found out through a member of the States General, " one of my old and constant friends," and a staunch supporter of the Orange party, that another secret order had just been sent to De Ruyter telling him to return—after he had finished his Guinea business—viâ the coast of North America, and the West Indies, doing all the damage he could en route. Downing hopes that all the King's Plantations, and the island of Barbadoes, will be at once warned to protect themselves. He also suggests that his friendly spy should receive a reward of £500. Almost apologetically Downing explains that, had this friend not been away on the earlier occasion, he would certainly have apprised him, in due course, of the original De Ruyter orders.[2]

In this month, December, 1664, the English took a large number of Dutch merchantmen carrying wine from

[1] Wicquefort, *Histoire ses Provinces Unies*, Tom. III, pp. 137–8. See also Pontalis, *De Witt*, Tom. I, p. 331.

[2] Letter CLXI, Dec. $\frac{6}{16}$, 1664, to Lord Clarendon in Lister's *Clarendon*, Vol. III.

Bordeaux, and attacked in the Straits of Gibraltar, though not very successfully, the rich Dutch merchant fleet coming from Smyrna. All Dutch vessels in English harbours were confiscated. Letters of mark were issued on both sides. Finally, on February 22/March 4, 1665, the King formally declared war on the United Provinces, Parliament having already for that purpose on November 25 promised, upon the motion of a Norfolk country gentleman, the unprecedented sum of £2,500,000.[1]

Such was the sequence of historical events, which like ghostly figures gradually looming out from a dark background of ancestral misunderstanding and enmity at length took substantial form in the second Dutch War.

In the account of these events in this and the preceding chapter I have deliberately endeavoured to describe the passage of years from the central standpoint of humanity ; to convey to the reader the spectacle of personality whether of Downing, Clarendon or De Witt, sometimes controlling, more often controlled by, always contending with the Time-Spirit ; to present the Past not as an accomplished impalpability, but as the hour in which men actually once did live, and move and have their being. Hitherto, however, in the account of these years from 1661 to 1665 it has been necessary to keep largely to the high road and to describe the main incidents. Let us now branch off and explore various by-ways which, though not as important as the beaten track, are, nevertheless, important, and reveal much seventeenth-century landscape.

Very frequently in this book I have referred to Downing as an Ambassador, simply because that is the most expressive general description of one who represents his Nation at a foreign Court. But Downing was not technically an Ambassador : under Cromwell he was Resident at the Hague, under Charles II he was—during 1661–5—Envoy Extraordinary.

[1] For the final stages preceding the declaration of war, see Wicquefort, *Histoire des Provinces Unies*, Tom. III, p. 184 ; Pontalis, *De Witt*, Tom I, pp. 332–3 ; Clarendon's *Continuation*, Vol. II, 432–4 and 440 ; Lister's *Clarendon*, Vol. II, ch. xi.

In the seventeenth century questions of diplomatic procedure and precedence were of immense importance, so important that Wicquefort, the brilliant contemporary historian of the United Provinces, has also come down to fame as the author of a massive treatise on the Ambassador and his Functions. Wicquefort intensely disliked Downing, whom he regarded as the man who contributed more than any other to the fatal Dutch war of 1665-7.[1] Both in his book on Ambassadors and in his History, Wicquefort describes Downing as trying to presume, to push himself into the privileges proper to Ambassadors, whereas, technically, he was only a Minister of the second rank. Thus he represents Downing as taking advantage of the fact that the Dutch were not too well acquainted with the technique of forms and ceremonies, to try and get himself received at his coach door and escorted upstairs when he came to confer officially. This was the privilege of Ambassadors ; Ministers of the second rank stepped out of their coaches by themselves, and were only met at the top of the stairs, being conducted from that point into audience of the States General. But Downing, whether by design or accident, on one occasion arrived at a conference at the precise moment when two Deputies were also waiting to enter. All three therefore went upstairs together. From this casual incident Downing tried to establish a formal precedent, but Wicquefort is glad to be able to say that in this attempt he failed.[2]

That Downing did endeavour to magnify his office is witnessed elsewhere than in Wicquefort. Among the Downing correspondence in the British Museum is a letter dated July 19, 1661, from Lord Clarendon, in the round, fair hand of his devoted son, Lord Cornbury, to whom it was dictated. In this letter the great Minister inferentially rebukes Sir George Downing. Clarendon says that the French Ambassador in London, on the instruction of

[1] Wicquefort, *Histoire des Provinces Unies*, Tom. II, p. 557.

[2] Wicquefort, *L'Ambassadeur et ses Fonctions*, Tom. I, p. 58 (edition of 1746) ; *Histoire des Provinces Unies*, Tom. III, pp. 50–1.

Louis XIV himself, has reported to him (Clarendon) that Downing had insisted on being " treated with Excellence " at the Hague, and that the French Ambassador there feared " ill offices " if he failed to comply. As to " ill offices " Clarendon says he is confident that Downing would not dream of them. As to the title of " Excellence," Clarendon has told the French Ambassador that he knew nothing of it, but that he was sure there must be some mistake " and that you knew too well the formes to be observed, to demand anything that was not your due." [1] The truth was that Downing intensely distrusted the French. From a very early date he saw upon the horizon the beginnings of that cloud which twelve years later was darkening the sky, and causing even England—in her insular security—grave anxiety.[2] De Witt was, of course, perfectly aware that Louis XIV was an uneasy neighbour for the Dutch, but he hoped by the conclusion of a mutual defensive alliance in April, 1662, between France and the United Provinces, to balance France against the danger from England, just as by the English-Dutch Treaty of September, 1662, he hoped to balance England against the danger from France. Meanwhile for the United Provinces he would preserve the peace which was essential to her as the supreme commercial power. As early as March, 1662, however, Downing in a letter to Secretary Nicholas pointed out that the interests of the United Provinces and France were, in reality, irreconcilable : " their interest consists wholly in peace, that they may trade, and the King of France his interest consists wholly in warre for the maintaining all hee has gotten from his neighbours. . . ." [3]

[1] *B.M. Add. MSS.*, 22,919, ff. 158–9.

[2] In a letter to Nicholas of February 28/March 10, 1661/2, Downing, commenting on the proposed sale of Dunkirk, which he greatly disapproved, thus refers to France, " besides what would ye effect thereof be but to animate and encourage boundlesse ambition." *B.M. Egerton MSS.*, 2538, ff. 35–6.

[3] Japikse, *De Verwikkelingen*, etc., Appendix, pp. xxvi–vii; see also in Lister's *Clarendon*, Vol. III, Letters LXXXIX and XC. Clarendon, following the policy of Cromwell in Foreign Affairs, desired to remain on the best terms with France.

De Witt was partly influenced in his attempt to ally himself more closely with France than with England by that internal cancer which afflicted the United Provinces, the bitter feud between the Orange and Burgher parties. Thus in an illuminating letter of October 6, 1661, to Van Beuningen, the Dutch Ambassador Extraordinary at Paris, De Witt points out how the interests of the youthful Prince of Orange are bound up with those of England and so are contrary to those of France. De Witt, therefore, discourages the French King from supporting the English attempt to press the restoration of the Prince to his ancestral dignities.[1]

Downing's hostility to France, and his self-assertiveness as a diplomatist, receive the most intriguing testimony from the pen of the French Ambassador at the Hague, Monsieur le Comte D'Estrades.

It is January 24, 1664, and D'Estrades is writing to the great French Minister Lionne. D'Estrades says he cannot understand why the English Court defer to Downing's advice—he is a seditious little man who hates the French to extremity. For his part, D'Estrades would have thought the King of England would have put Downing rather on the gallows (sur une potence) than in his councils : a man pushed up by Cromwell from being a schoolmaster to being an Ambassador, in order to destroy the (exiled) Royal House in Holland. Downing is putting reports about that the King of England will withdraw his Ambassador, Lord Hollis, from Paris, on account of Hollis's disrespectful treatment there. Time was, when D'Estrades was Ambassador in London, that Downing had to wait eight days for an audience, so little did Clarendon esteem him. Now everything is different. The King of France should beware.[2]

On August 7, 1664, D'Estrades reports to Louis XIV that Downing has been to see him. He had pretended to

[1] *Lettres et Négociations entre M. J. De Witt*, etc., Tom. II, pp. 195–7.
[2] *Lettres, Mémoires et Négociations de Monsieur le Comte D'Estrades*, Tom, II, pp. 363–4; edition 1743.

be visiting some one else at the French Embassy and had suddenly found himself in D'Estrades' room. D'Estrades had always declined to treat Downing with ambassadorial honours, hence this ruse of Downing to get into his room in an informal way. Downing tells D'Estrades that the Spanish Ambassador had accorded him ambassadorial privileges, and he proposes to D'Estrades a compromise. Let them walk together in the Voorhout and thus avoid the difficulty of ceremonial visits. D'Estrades declines; he sends a Page to conduct Downing to the room of the person he came ostensibly to see. For his part, D'Estrades did not budge a step from his place.[1] Again, on September 25, 1664, D'Estrades is writing to Louis XIV: he encloses a memorandum presented by Downing to the States General. The memorandum, says D'Estrades, is in frightful French, sheer balderdash (le galination), assuredly enough to weary anyone who attempts to read it.[2] Again, on December 11, 1664, to Louis XIV: rumours are about, says D'Estrades, that Louis will not fulfil his treaty obligations and assist the Dutch in the war with England. De Witt has told the Assembly that these rumours, which were contained in certain letters, were fabricated by Downing, whose style he recognized; that your Majesty was the Father of this State, and that assuredly he would not abandon his children.[3]

Unfortunately for De Witt and D'Estrades, that was precisely what his Majesty did for over a year, delaying to join his Dutch Allies till early in 1666. D'Estrades' dispatches throughout the early months of 1665 pathetically reiterate the bad impression created at the Hague by Louis' delays, which, says D'Estrades, were justifying everything the Spanish Cabal and Downing had been saying for months past.[4]

The point of view of Louis XIV was that he did not want to be dragged into a war, one result of which might

[1] D'Estrades, *Lettres*, etc., Tom. II, pp. 478–82.
[2] Id., Tom. II, pp. 491–2.
[3] Id., Tom. II, p. 563.
[4] Id., Tom. III, passim.

be that the Dutch, if successful, would become even more powerful commercially than they were already. He expounds the situation with admirable clarity to D'Estrades, and as this letter and D'Estrades' reply throw a flood of light on the war and its causes, let us see what they say. Louis' letter is dated May 22, 1665. He says that the English Secretary of State has pointed out to the French Ambassadors—Louis was attempting at this time, to end the war by mediation—that the past difficulties can be easily accommodated. The difficulty is for the future, in agreeing " un Règlement de Commerce." Louis has taken occasion to ask the Dutch Ambassador at Paris what steps his masters were prepared to offer as to the Règlement which Downing presented some time ago. In truth, if the Dutch are not prepared to offer reasonable conditions in this matter, I (Louis) shall take the liberty of telling them that it is not very just that they should drag me, against all my interests, into a war, just because they covet all the commerce of the world, and all the profit " à l'exclusion de toutes les autres Nations." [1]

On May 28, 1665, D'Estrades replies to his Master : he will acquaint himself with the English position as to a Règlement, but if it's the old story that Holland has all the trade of the world, and that England cannot suffer it, the Dutch will simply answer that trade is free for all, that if they can be shown to have hindered trade where it ought to be free, they will do right to England and other Nations. If, however, the complaint is, in reality, simply that the Dutch are better traders, obviously the Dutch will not give up what they have got. These, says D'Estrades, are the sentiments of De Witt and his Cabal.[2] On the same day De Witt wrote to D'Estrades. He has repeatedly told Downing that the Dutch are perfectly ready to discuss a " Règlement pour le Commerce," when the English will agree that it should apply not only to the Indies but to Europe. The Dutch are determined not to make a distinction in this matter, " puisqu'ils jugent que

[1] D'Estrades, *Lettres*, etc., Tom. III, pp. 186–8. [2] Id., p. 195.

ce qui est juste pour les Indes ne peut pas être injuste en Europe."[1]

What De Witt, in effect, meant by this letter was that England must consent to a modification of its exclusive Navigation Acts, if the Dutch were to make concessions in the Indies and in Africa. In reality a Règlement, whether within or without Europe, could not have prevented war in the conditions of 1660–5. The Peace Treaty of September, 1662, had provided a perfectly sensible safety-valve for both Nations in the clause which gave time for mutual wrongs to be settled by the process of law, and failing that, by restitution and compensation. Nevertheless, both Nations had deliberately violated the Treaty.

The Dutch point of view was, that they were the great colonial and trading power of the world, a position they had acquired by ceaseless industry, immense endurance, and native genius for trade. They would not lose anything without a struggle. The point of view of other Nations, and specially of England, was, that a share of the world's trade must somehow be obtained. General Monk, Duke of Albemarle, who had a genius for being sensible, had a conversation with Van Gogh, the Dutch Ambassador in London, in July, 1664. Monk said: "The English Nation must extend its commerce." "Is it, therefore, necessary that the Dutch should sacrifice theirs?" asked Van Gogh. "Commerce is, after all, a treasure which is enriched by the industry of each." "Yes," said Monk, "but cost what it may, our Nation must find its share, otherwise the peace will not be kept."[2]

That the Dutch trod on the toes of almost all the world at this time in the matter of commerce is undoubtedly true. Now it is the English, now the French, now the Danes,

[1] De Witt, *Correspondance Française*, etc., *publiée par M. François Combes*, Tom. I, pp. 257–8.

[2] Pontalis, *De Witt*, Tom. I, p. 325. Van Gogh wrote thus to De Witt on July 20, 1664. My version is a translation of the French of Pontalis.

now the Swedes, now the Venetians, who complain of lawless acts on the high seas by Dutch vessels.[1]

Wicquefort, the historian of the United Provinces, who wrote part of his history actually under the eye of De Witt, whom he immensely admired, finds himself compelled to admit that his countrymen were at times not a little trying : " Je me trouve obligé d'avouer, que ceux, qui avoient le plus de part à la direction des affaires des Provinces Unies, s'oublioient quelquefois dans la prospérité, et négligoient de ménager l'amitié des Princes voisins, et avoient beaucoup d'indifférence pour leurs prétensions, quelque justes et équitables qu'elles fussent." [2] Wicquefort describes, with that power of picturesque expression which makes him so attractive as an historian, how Downing took advantage of the differences in which the Dutch were involved with other Nations. " He entered into them," writes Wicquefort, " as evil spirits enter, so they say, into the storms which gather in the air." [3]

Finally, an interesting and entertaining sidelight on Anglo-Dutch differences is supplied by some of the letters in the Downing correspondence in the British Museum. Let us read the following. Mr. Joseph Williamson, the secretary of Secretary of State Bennet, is writing to Downing on February 28, 1661-2. " Wee have lately received [advice] of a Newsmonger at Utreicht one Van Haecht, which in his weekly Bookes hath of late taken an insolent liberty in speaking of his Ma^ty and his govern^t. Mr. Secry's desire is you would please to eye him, and if you find occasion demand redresse in it." [4]

On September 23, 1663, the Royal African Company

[1] For French complaints see Lister's *Clarendon*, Vol. III, Letter CLXVIII; for the Danes and Swedes, Wicquefort, *Histoire des Provinces Unies*, Tom. III, pp. 164–8; also *B.M. Add. MSS.* 22,920, ff. 26–9, a letter of February 10, 1664, from Hannibal Schester to Sir George Downing about Danish grievances against the Dutch, and asking for Downing's good offices. For the Venetians, see De Witt, *Lettres et Négociations*, etc., Tom. II, p. 550.

[2] Wicquefort, *Histoire des Provinces Unies*, etc., Tom. III, p. 166.

[3] Id., Tom. III, p. 164.

[4] *B.M. Add. MSS.*, 22,919, f. 201.

wrote to Downing warmly thanking him for his intervention on behalf of their ships the *Charles* and *James*, prevented by the Dutch from trading on the Gold Coast. These merchant correspondents indulge in a little sardonic, and at the same time, heavy humour :

" If those States will owne, that Wilrey [the Director General of the Dutch West Indies Company] had their orders to warrant his action, wee will hope, it may begett some Parralel resolution of State here. If they disclaime it, and leave their West India Company to be responsible, they will send us to a towne, where there is no house, unlesse wee pay ourselves per legem talionis, but wee thinke it not impossible, but that Wilrey beinge dead, both the States and their Company will disclaime his action, and soe send us to his place, for satisfaction, where wee would be loath to seek it. S^r^ wee lay a very great Stresse of confidence, upon your Cordiall and discreet manadgement of this worke, and shall endeavour, that our thanks may in some proportion keepe pace, with your affectionate paines herein." [1]

Another of Downing's correspondents was Lord Hollis, the English Ambassador at Paris. His first letter is wholly taken up with his celebrated difference with Louis XIV over ambassadorial precedence, Louis having ordered that in future Princes of the Blood should take precedence of Ambassadors. Lord Hollis regarded this as a slight, and it was long before he could bring himself to be received in audience. The letter discusses in minute detail the historical antecedents in this matter for the last century or so.[2]

The next letter from Lord Hollis is dated 7-17 April, 1664. In the course of it he says :

" . . . but to tell you trewly though I expect not very much hence, yet I looke for lesse kindnes from your Minheers that you deale with, who use us very coarsely everywhere as all my intelligence from England tells me, refusing us ye restitution of Poleron, and denying us trading in all ye coast of Guinee (wch can signify nothinge else but that they meane to quarrell wth us) and upon all occasions falling

[1] *B.M. Add. MSS.*, 22,920, ff. 22–3.

[2] Id. 22,920, ff. 19–20. Letter dated from Paris 1–11 January, 1663–4.

foule upon ye English, as upon this bearer Mr Smith whose goods have bene violently taken away by some Dutch Captaines contrary to ye order of their owne Consull upon the place, and of him that is at Constantinople, as our Ambassador there My Ld of Winchelsea writes to me, who saith ye Kg of England's honour is much engaged in it, and therefore desires me to recommend the busines to you, wch I have now done, and shall trouble you no further at this time, but to assur you that I am your very affecte humble servant, Hollis." [1]

On September 2-12, 1664, Hollis writes, deprecating a war : he hopes Downing will pour " oyle, and not vinegar, to prevent a breach if possible, especially in this conjuncture, when we shall but make our neighbours sport, and play their game." [2] But Downing was better at vinegar than oil.

By the middle of October, however, Hollis has changed his view. He thinks the Dutch want war :

" The truth is they would have all that trade [Guinea] and will try a bloody nose before they quitt their pretensions, and that is ye quarrel . . . God sent us good successe now in the beginning, for who prevailes will be in the right, and his tale heard." [3]

A little later, in November, Lord Hollis becomes truculent :

" I perceive you are still treating with papers whilst your friends the Hollanders treat us with Cannons and muskets in Guinea. . . ." [4]

Finally, at the end of January, 1665 : " I perceive their High and Mighty Lordships doe bestirre themselves, and meane to be all ye sonnes of Mars." [5]

But the reader has by now heard enough of the causes and preliminaries of the second Dutch War 1665-7 : If he has not, then he should repair to the British Museum,

[1] *B.M. Add. MSS.*, f. 35. [2] Id., 22,920, ff. 46–7.
[3] Id., f. 51 : letter dated October 17–27, 1664.
[4] Id., 22,920, f. 55 : letter dated from Paris November 7, 1664.
[5] Id., f. 80.

and read a very brilliant twenty-one-page pamphlet written on December 16, 1664, by Sir George Downing, which sets down, in historical survey, the British view that the Dutch were the aggressors. The Dutch view that the English were the aggressors he will find in the volumes of Wicquefort. As in the case of almost every other war that has ever broken out, each side accused the other of being the aggressors. The truth appears to have been that both sides were guilty in almost precisely equal measure. The title of Downing's pamphlet is characteristic, and is as follows :

" A Discourse Written by Sr George Downing The King of Great Britain's Envoyée Extraordinary to the State of the United Provinces, Vindicating His Royal Master from the Insolencies of a Scandalous Libel, Printed under the Title of ' An Extrait out of the Register of the States General of the United Provinces, upon the Memorial of Sir George Downing Envoyée etc ' And delivered by the Agent de Heyde for such, to several Publick Ministers : Whereas No such Resolution was ever Communicated to the said Envoyée, nor any Answer at all Returned by Their Lordships to the said Memorial." [1]

[1] The British Museum catalogue reference is B.M. 1103, f. 64, under " Downing, Sir George."

CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE HAGUE, 1665 : SIR GEORGE DOWNING AS WAR CORRESPONDENT, AND OTHER MATTERS

(Weave the crimson web of War)
Let us go, and let us fly,
Where our friends the conflict share,
Where they triumph, where they die.
—GRAY: *The Fatal Sisters.*

For never two such Kingdoms did contend
Without much fall of blood; whose guiltless drops
Are every one a woe, a sore complaint,
'Gainst him whose wrongs give edge unto the swords
That make such waste in brief mortality."
—*King Henry V*, Act I, Sc. ii, ls. 24–28.

THOUGH war was formally declared between the two Nations on February 22 to March 4, 1665, Downing did not leave the Hague till the end of August, nor did Van Gogh leave London. Wicquefort professes himself unable to understand why the Dutch left their Ambassador in England while both Nations were at death-grips,[1] but the explanation appears to have been that as Louis XIV's Ambassadors were mediating at London it was considered desirable to retain the Dutch representative in London also. Hence there was an excuse for the English Government to keep Downing at the Hague. From their point of view he could do very useful work where he was, though not of a pacific sort. In fact, during the vital early months of the war, Downing's dispatches gave the English Government minute and

[1] Wicquefort, *Histoire des Provinces Unies*, Tom. III, p. 203.

constant details of the mobilization of the Dutch fleets, of the armaments in preparation, of the disposition of the populace, of a thousand and one matters which fall within the province of first-class secret intelligence in time of war. Thus on March 14/24, 1665, Downing, through his "friend," gives Clarendon information that the Dutch fleet will be in two portions, 30 ships at the Weylingen and 90 in the Texel. "This intelligence," he writes in cipher, "must be kept with all imaginable secrecy": the policy is De Witt's, who is against concentration of the whole fleet in the Texel, owing to the difficulty of getting out except with an easterly wind.[1] Again on April 11/21 the "friend" betrays a vital secret to Downing. The two Dutch fleets will shortly join forces. Therefore, says Downing, the Duke of York must hasten to the coast if this junction is to be stopped. Accordingly the Duke of York sets sail and for about a month, until compelled to return owing to storms, he prevented Obdam, the Dutch Admiral, from uniting his squadrons.[2]

Through the aid of these Downing letters published long ago by Lister, and still more through the mass of original letters and documents recently published on behalf of the Dutch Government by Dr. Colenbrander—including thirty letters from Downing, principally to Lord Arlington—it is possible to live again in the actual hours of 1665.[3] A rapid glance at some of the letters, specially those of Downing—but the historian Wicquefort was also carrying on an extraordinary correspondence in French with the King of Denmark, and also with Lionne, and it will be amusing to look over his shoulder now and again as he writes—will reveal what numerous and bulky volumes often fail to reveal.

[1] Lister's *Clarendon*, Vol. III, Letter CLXV.

[2] Id., Vol. III, Letter CLXX. Also Edmundson's *History of Holland*, p. 237.

[3] *Bescheiden uit Vreemde Archieven omtrent de Groote Nederlandsche Zeeoorlogen* 1652–1676 *verzameld door Dr. H. T. Colenbrander*, 1919. In this chapter I refer to this work as Colenbrander, I, etc.

THE HAGUE, 1665

It is January 17/27, 1665. The States of Holland, writes Wicquefort to the King of Denmark, have sent an engineer to Helvoetsluys, to arrange there three batteries of twenty cannons each, of which the least will fire twelve pounds weight of ball. Consequently they no longer fear a sudden descent of the English there. Domestic disorders, however, are more difficult to cope with. Last Wednesday, when they were observing the fast, several Ministers imported into their sermons discourses of considerable imprudence. At Rotterdam, one of them had the insolence to say that Barneveldt had been deservedly executed as a traitor to his country ; that the present Government displeased him ; that it was to be feared that ingratitude to the House of Orange would bring ruin upon the State, and that unless there was a change of policy " il faudra un jour manger de l'herbe comme Nebucadnezar." The States of Holland have ordered suspension of the preacher's salary, and he is to give an account of his words.[1]

That neither the Dutch nor the English in 1665 needed to take any lessons in, for instance, Propaganda, even from the late Lord Northcliffe, is clear from a letter from Downing to Lord Arlington dated 14/24 April, 1665. Downing says that a letter has just been read in the States General purporting to have come from Guinea. It speaks of cruelties alleged to have been committed by the English upon the Dutch in those parts, " of frying Dutchmen by the fire and cutting off the noses and eares of others, and strange stories of this kind." Downing believes the letter to be an invention " and written here, yet it was immediately ordered to be printed for to exasperate the minds of men, and copies thereof are to be sent to the Dutch fleet to be read to all the seamen for to incourage them." He suggests that something should be printed and published " to disabuse the world " in this matter.[2]

[1] Colenbrander, I, 158.

[2] Id., I, 165–6. This same letter is also in Lister, *Clarendon*, III, Letter CLXXI, but addressed to Clarendon.

Insulting broadsides were also printed in either country. Here is the title of an English Broadside printed in 1665 :

"The Dutch Boare Dissected, or a Description of Hogg-Land. A Dutchman is a Lusty, Fat, Two-Legged Cheese-worm : A Creature that is so addicted to Eating Butter, Drinking fat Drink, and Sliding, that all the World knows him for a slippery Fellow. An Hollander is not an High-lander, but a Low lander ; for he loves to be down in the Dirt, and Boarlike to wallow therein."

This Broadside contains a very long set of verses, of which the last runs :

"Their State-House such is,
It stands on Crutches,
Or Stilts, like some old Creeple :
Frogs in great Number
Their Land doth cumber,
And such-like Croaking People."[1]

Patriotic verses, indeed, abounded. An English country parson, one John Bradshaw, the Rector of Cublington, wrote a laughable punning poem on the rival fleets. The Dutch Fleet won't come out :

Perhaps they have no winde and so keepe in :
What ? Out of breath before they do begin ?
How should they finde the way, when the news sayes
Damms are so many, and theyr in a Maese ?
What ? Leo Belgicus rampant before,
Now not so much as passant from the shore ?

He runs through some of the names of the English Fleet.

Fairfax can fight. The *Mary* hath her *Ave.*
Gloster was never taken. Th' *Plimmoth* will brave ye.
The *Leopard* is feirce. Th' *Yarmouth* may
Fish on for herings, and so finde you play.
. . . . . .

[1] *Catalogue of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum.* Division I : Political and Personal Satires. Vol. I, 1320–1689, pp. 575–7 ; No. 1028.

The *Norwich* will powre upon you without question
Vollies of dumplings, but hard of digestion.

. . . . . .

These the main vessells are. I hope the action
Will end, and so would I, with satisfaction.[1]

Meanwhile both Downing and Wicquefort wrote constantly of the Dutch preparations for the naval battle. Some of their ships are very large, says Downing, on May 5/15, 1665, one of them is 155 foot by the keel, another 165 foot, and of great breadth, and armed with brass guns. But for De Witt being with the fleet Admiral Opdam's house would have been pulled down by the angry mob who thought he ought to have sailed before. Now they blame De Witt " that though he is so quick and fierce at projecting and givieng orders, and blaming others, yet that as to the point of doieng they see he is no more than another man." [2] Wicquefort, however—and Downing himself a little later—shows the great Dutch statesman in a different light. But for De Witt, Wicquefort says, the Dutch Fleet would not have been ready for sea for another two months, owing to the rivalries in the various States' Admiralties.[3]

The Dutch Fleet in the Texel, Downing writes a little later (May 12/22), is 80 strong, excluding fire-ships and yachts. Nothing like it has ever been seen in this country before. Both at the Hague and at Amsterdam the Dutch speak " infinitely high," that the Texel fleet alone is quite enough to fight the Duke, and they " make no account at all of all the Duke's small ships which they say will not be able to abide a broadside of their great ones . . ." [4]

By the middle of May the two Dutch Fleets succeeded

[1] Colenbrander, I, 169–71. In Holland Downing said on May 23/2 June, 1665, that such " villainous pamphlets " came out " that, indeed, it would create a horror to read them." Id., I, 184.

[2] Id., I, 172.

[3] Id., I, 175: Wicquefort to Lionne, May 11/21, 1665; I, 182–3, Downing to Arlington, 16/26 May.

[4] Id., I, 176–7.

in effecting a junction, the Duke of York's Fleet having been compelled to seek harbour owing to storms.[1] The Dutch combined fleet now had orders, Downing says (May 16/26), to seek out the English Fleet and fight them. A week later "there is nothing talckt of, but blocking up the Thames and landing of men in the Isle of Wight."[2]

On May 29/June 8, 1665, Lord Falmouth on board the *Royal Charles* wrote to Arlington: "they [the English Fleet] sail to-morrow for Sole Bay, Sir George Downing's letter making them wish to be in deeper water. Hopes to meet the Dutch half seas over."[3] Three days later Wicquefort tells Lionne that the weather is perfect for a naval battle, and that one is instantly expected.[4] Then on June 3/13, 1665, the great naval battle of Southwold Bay takes place. On that day the Danish Resident wrote to his Minister Bierman at about five in the morning: they have heard the thunder of cannon since the dawn of day: no news has yet come in: every one is running to Scheveningen, and he must go too, to seek news. He adds a postscript: he has just come from Scheveningen and has seen the smoke and heard furious firing, so powerful that the windows at the Hague are shaking. "Demain nous pourions avoir nouvelles du succès."[5] But success was not for the Dutch. Downing, in a letter of extraordinary vividness, describes, on June 6/16, how the news of the great English victory reached the Hague. The letter is unfortunately far too long to give in full, but this is the gist of it. The letter begins by describing the cannonade: "att this place we heard wonderfull shooting with a continued terrible thunder from about 2 of the clock in the morning upon Satturday till between 11 and 12 at night, and about 4 in the afternoone there was such a blow that it shooke many houses and made many windowes blow open in the outward parts of the Hague, and the like att severall other times; between 10

[1] Colenbrander, I, 180–3.
[2] Id., I, 181–4.
[3] *Calendar State Papers Dom.*, 1664–5, p. 393.
[4] Colenbrander, I, 187.
[5] Id., I, 187–8.

and 11 at night sitting in my dineinge Roome (though my house be in the middle of the Hague) there was such a blow that it made all my windowes rattle and blew open my casements, and about one at night it shooke the whole house, and the very beds as if it had bin a great earthquake." At daybreak on Sunday some ships were seen at the mouth of the Maes. Between six and seven in the morning a brief note of six lines was handed to Van Wimmenum (a Dutch Grandee) on the strand at Sheveningen, amid a great crowd of people, "he presently clapt it in his pockett, without makeinge any sounds of joy." However, he conveyed the impression that the news was not bad. Thereupon a report arose that the Dutch had been victorious, and in one of the churches the Minister gave thanksgiving to God. But within an hour or so the truth began to leak out, "and now began Job's messengers to come in one after another, and it was known that the ships before the Maes were John Everson with 14 or 15 more of their fleet that had run away in the night." Some of the sailors from one of the finest men of war of 70 guns came ashore "all bloody" and reported that their ship was waterlogged. Then it became known that Admiral Opdam had been blown up with his flag-ship: "she had 84 brass guns and 500 men on board her, besides many persons of condition voluntiers," also that Admiral Cortenaer had died of wounds. The tremendous explosion heard in the Hague at one o'clock in the morning was the blowing up of three Dutch Men of War who became entangled and were fired by an English fire-ship. The Dutch cry up Van Tromp (the younger) who brought off their fleet, and denounce John Everson. The Government are minimising their losses as best they can, but Downing reckons their loss at at least 30 sail.[1] The English lost the *Charity*, and 60 survivors of that ship—which fought three Dutchmen for four hours—out of 170 have just been brought into Amsterdam. "This is a mighty victory, they never re-

[1] It was, in fact, 25; 16 sunk or destroyed, and 9 captured. Edmundson's *Holland*, p. 237.

ceived such a blow before, they confess themselves beaten, and you may read it in the countenance of every man that passeth the streets." The East India Company's stocks are wonderfully fallen. De Witt is trying to get a fleet together again with all speed to protect the East India merchant fleet shortly expected, and other rich ships, and galliots are being sent to the North of Scotland to warn all Merchantmen to put into Norwegian ports.

Downing then gives an amazing description as to the steps he took for his own security in case of an outburst of popular feeling against him as the English Ambassador. Several public Ministers advised him to leave his house, and offered him theirs, but he thought this would be unworthy of "the King my master." Then it was suggested to him he should ask for a guard, "to which I replyed that I should not doe that neither, for that also would looke but very scurvilly and dishonorably." The Ambassador thereupon took the extraordinary course of fortifying his house. He sent for several friendly English who at once came, and he provided himself well with arms, powders "and things like Granadoes." As soon as he was certain the fleets had engaged he kept his whole household within doors, and intends to do so for some days yet. "I had carryed up such quantities of great stones, and placed them at the top of the staires and other convenient places, as also great barrels of earth made up in strong casks at the top of the staires, to be ready to tumble downe upon any that should adventure up, which would have made worke among any that should have adventured to come, and I kept strong Guards night and day, but yett without any appearance of noise to the streets, but I thanke God I have nott yett mett with the least occasion to make use thereof, nor so much as an ill word spoken before my doore, nor a stone cast at any of my windowes."

Downing adds that "every Dutchman that passeth by my house casts a most dismall disconsolate looke up at my windowes." He ends up his letter with an account of how the infuriated mob threw the unpopular Admiral

Everson into the water, and riotously attacked the Deputy Governor of the Brill, who intervened. Had not soldiers come to the rescue both the Admiral and the Deputy Governor would have been killed.[1]

While the English only lost one ship in the battle, their losses in killed and wounded, though much less than the Dutch, were heavy enough. More than two hundred men were killed on the Duke of York's flag-ship alone, while Lord Muskerry and Lord Falmouth fell so close to the Duke "that his Highness was all covered with their Blood." Admiral Sir John Lawson perished of his wounds.[2]

At the same time that Downing was writing from the Hague, the French Ambassadors in London were writing to Lionne in Paris gossip about the news of the victory in the English capital. On Tuesday evening, Courtin says, he had the honour to be in the Park of "Saint Jemmes" with Charles II. A gentleman just arrived from Harwich that morning came up to the King, and told him he had spoken to a Fisherman who assured him he had delivered some Fish to the Duke of York and his Officers at 10 o'clock on Saturday night, and that on that day six or seven Dutch Warships had been sunk, and seven or eight burned. To support what he said the gentleman produced two yellow standards which Charles II thought must have belonged to the vessel which was blown up on the eve of the fight. The messenger added that the cannonade was heard at Harwich throughout Sunday.[3]

Four days later the French Ambassadors tell Lionne it was a narrow squeak that there had not been "une grillade" of Ambassadors on the night of national rejoicing, because all the streets were full of bonfires, and the French were extremely unpopular. As it was they escaped with an insult or two. If De Witt insists on sending out another Dutch Fleet it will certainly be beaten more

[1] Colenbrander, I, 195–9.
[2] Clarendon's *Continuation*, Vol. II, pp. 507–8; edition of 1761.
[3] Colenbrander, I, 204, letter dated 8/18 June, 1665.

easily than the last. " Ce n'est pas le mestier des marchans de faire la guerre, il faut de bons chefs, de bons officiers, de braves soldats et de hardis matelots. Les Hollandois manquent de tout cela." [1]

No statement about the Dutch could have been more absurdly untrue. Downing knew better. He did not fail to inform the Government that they must not live in a fool's paradise, that the Dutch inspired by De Witt were making desperate efforts to refit their fleet, that they were rewarding those who had fought well, and court-martialling those who had not ; indeed, says the sardonic Downing, " if they should be as severe as they threaten, they had need to send to Norway for wood to make gallosses." Downing beseeches the Government to strengthen the Duke's fleet. " What they doe now here, you must looke upon as the effect of desperate men, and I pray let no other advise make you believe or imagine that they intend not or cannot gett their fleet to see againe." [2] In the same letter he graphically describes how the feeling of the populace was turning towards the House of Orange in the hour of disaster : how when the drums were beating at Leyden to recruit more men in the name of the States General, " the women gott about the Drums, and cutt them in pieces crying out the Devil take the States, beat for the Prince."

But the time when William III would be called upon to save his country was postponed to an hour more desperate. Meanwhile his heroic rival De Witt struggled with the Time Spirit, and by efforts literally superhuman prevailed victoriously against it.

It is, however, merely the object of this chapter to give the reader an intimate view of certain days and hours of War in 1665, a view which owes its intimacy mainly to the indefatigable and brilliant pen of Sir George Downing

[1] Colenbrander, I, 217–19, Letters of 12/22 June, 1665.

[2] Id., I, 207–11, letter to Arlington of June 9/19, 1665. This letter is also given in Lister's *Clarendon*, III, Letter CLXXIV, with the exception of a few sentences at the end.

Space forbids more than a cursory glance at the Ambassador's remaining letters at this time.

Here is a pleasing picture. The Dutch Admiralty at Amsterdam have released 18 boys—apparently under thirteen or fourteen years of age—taken in the *Charity*, or in some merchant ships. A kind Dutch Merchant, Anna Peter, has brought them himself from Amsterdam to Downing at the Hague, and Downing is arranging to send them safely to England. Downing suggests that the English Government should reply to this charitable action of the Amsterdam Admiralty by a similar release of at least double the number of Dutch boy prisoners in England. Peter is a very rich merchant and "a man of strange charity and particularly to the English": he has some friends—prisoners in England: Downing hopes they will be released, as a recompense for Peter's action.[1]

It is gratifying to learn from a later letter of Downing (July 14/24) that "it had pleased his Majesty to sett at liberty 101 boys in the place of those few sent me from Amsterdam."[2]

The next picture is the opposite of pleasant. The English sailor prisoners in Amsterdam are herded together, 27 or 28 of them in a room 16½ feet long and 6½ feet wide. They are fed on "a little miserable butter milke mingled with water, and grutt, which is a sad kinde of meale of broken corne, and lamentable small beere." To take the air they can only go into a court—200 of them—50 foot square entirely enclosed with high houses. They can be visited only once a day for an hour, and the English Minister who provides religious consolation prays for victory against his Majesty—"a strange peece of Courtesie," comments Downing. The Ambassador represented to the States General that various cruelties had been practised on the prisoners, both during and since the battle: the Captain of the *Charity* exposed on the poop of a Dutch ship to be shot at by our men, the sailors with wounds undressed for

[1] Colenbrander, I, 227–8, letter 15/25 June, 1665.
[2] Id., I, 276.

several days, so that most of them died. That a woman captured on board "one of the bouyers" was stripped to her smock by Tromp's men "and very incivilly used, and thus she was stripped 2 or 3 times or more." Her child aged three, a little girl, had her mouth forced open while the soldiers blew tobacco into it to make her drunk. A servant boy of 14 was tied down, while lighted matches between his fingers burnt them "to the very bone." The prisoners at both Amsterdam and Rotterdam, falling sick, are not taken to the Hospital until "they are upon the point of death." [1] Precisely the same charge of cruelty to prisoners is brought by Wicquefort against the English. The Dutch prisoners, he says, were imprisoned in a roofless prison at Colchester, starved, forced "croupir dans les ordures, qu'ils ne pouvoient faire que sous eux." [2]

It is impossible not to accept stories of this kind in the face of a letter written on behalf of the English prisoners in Zeeland on June 28/July 8, 1666, by one of their number. The letter is addressed to Trinity House. They are little more than skin and bone, the letter says, "we ly on uppon the other and are almost stifled, they have put 30 of our men under ground into the dungin insomuch that we cannot indure this misery any longer." One "Mr. Downing of Rotterdam" who had an order for clearing us after the Amsterdam prisoners were cleared has neglected us for private business, and done nothing but give us twopence a day, which he says, is about to cease: "thus committing your worships to God's protextion wee rest your poare afflicted Cuntry men and humble servants." [3]

It is certainly true that Downing was entrusted with £5,000 for the maintenance, release, exchange and transport "of such of His Majesty's subjects as have been taken at sea and kept prisoners in any of the United Provinces,"

[1] Colenbrander, I, 273–6, letter July 14/24, 1665, to Lord Arlington.

[2] Wicquefort, *Histoire des Provinces Unies*, III, 204. Downing, on the other hand, alleged that the Dutch prisoners in England were treated very well.

[3] Colenbrander, I, 404–5.

of which sum he returned £1,500 unexpended to the Treasury when the War had ended.[1] But whatever faults Downing had, slackness was not among them, and it seems more than probable that the poor prisoners, in the bitterness of their hearts, chided him unjustly. It has already been seen that he had made the strongest representations on behalf of the Amsterdam and Rotterdam prisoners to the Dutch Government.

Downing's letters to Lord Arlington continue till August 8/18, 1665. They give constant account of the desperate energy of the Dutch in fitting out the new fleet; of the strength of that fleet; of the immense rejoicing when De Ruyter slipped back viâ the North of Scotland and Norway[2]; of his depredations on his prolonged voyage—some thirty English Merchantmen destroyed—of the urgent necessity of forbidding all Merchantmen leaving port without convoy—"and lett it not be thought that I write notions in the aire, I write what I know and understand, if I understand anything in the world"; of De Witt's going to sea with the Fleet—himself sounding "the Spanniards Gatt" and getting the Fleet through it. Downing's last letter ends: "They (the Dutch Fleet) are gone directly northward, and if they can gett home their East India ships and those from Bergen, they will thinke themselves well, but if they meet his Majesties fleet, they make no doubt of getting the better, and then who but de Witt!"[3]

The Dutch East and West India merchant fleet evaded capture in the main—Lord Sandwich caught a few of them of great value, and several war-ships—but the bulk of the fleet crammed with diamonds and such a mass of wealth as Sandwich thought had never before been heaped together

[1] *Calendar of Treasury Books*, Vol. I (1660–67), p. 693, and Vol. II, pp. 474–5.

[2] Colenbrander, I, 280. See also Wicquefort's letter to the King of Denmark, August 5/15, 1665, p. 284. Edmundson, *History of Holland*, pp. 237–8, appears to be wrong in saying that De Ruyter came back through the Channel.

[3] Id., I, 268–87.

in one place got safely out of Bergen, and back to Dutch ports in September.

Lord Sandwich in noble words sums up the abortive attempt of the English Squadron on Bergen. "Never was more courrageous and braver resolution exprest indeed, too many of our gallant bretheren fal'n." [1]

In the last days of August Sir George and Lady Downing left the Hague.[2] Downing's secretary, Gringuaud, had been imprisoned in retaliation for the English imprisonment of Cuneus, Van Gogh's secretary. Wicquefort has a parting shaft at Downing. Downing, he says, pretended to be alarmed by the arrest of his Secretary, and of one or two others in his or the Prince of Orange's service, and so crept away in the night, without paying his debts ! [3]

For more than six years we must now take leave of the Hague ; meanwhile to London " do we shift our scene."

[1] Colenbrander, I, 250–67 : Lord Sandwich's narrative 11 July–12 Oct., 1665.

[2] Id., I, 290. News letter from Rotterdam, August 31–September 9, 1665.

[3] Wicquefort, *Histoire des Provinces Unies*, III, 204.

CHAPTER TWELVE

SIR GEORGE DOWNING AND NATIONAL FINANCE : SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY 1667-1671

> Therefore doth heaven divide
> The state of man in divers functions,
> Setting endeavour in continual motion ;
> To which is fixed, as an aim or butt,
> Obedience : for so work the honey-bees,
> Creatures that by a rule in nature teach
> The act of order to a peopled Kingdom.
>
> —*King Henry V.*, Act I, Sc. ii, ls. 183–189.

AS an Ambassador Sir George Downing had seen the urgent necessity of the King's having an adequate revenue if he was to impress his neighbours with a sense of the security and power of England. Many times in his correspondence with Clarendon and Secretary Nicholas, Downing refers to the bad effect of a niggardly revenue, and the good effect of particular steps by Parliament to improve it. I find this illuminating passage in a letter of February $\frac{14}{24}$ 1661/2 to Secretary Nicholas among the Egerton manuscripts in the British Museum.

> " I hope speedily to find in some one of your letters some good and wholesome resolution of ye House of Commons in relation to his Maties Revenue whereby to inable him to speake like him who sayth (ab Edgaro quatuor maria vindico :)" [1]

It is not, therefore, surprising to find that no sooner had Sir George Downing returned from Holland at the end of August, 1665, than he became immersed in what

[1] *B.M. Egerton, MSS.*, 2538, ff. 33–4.

can only be described as, at that time, the veritable maze of National Finance. But for the recent and continuing labours of Dr. W. A. Shaw, in editing the *Calendar of Treasury Books and Papers* preserved at the Public Record Office, Downing's remarkable achievements in this field would never have been realized. As it is, it is safe to say that not one person in a thousand, including students and historians, has the slightest conception of what Downing accomplished, or of what he attempted to accomplish. What he actually accomplished was, in effect, the virtual creation of the Treasury as the first Department of State, as that term is understood to-day. Further, the great Constitutional reform—Appropriation of Supply—is due mainly to him. What he attempted to accomplish was the creation of a National Exchequer Bank, which, had his scheme been permanently successful, would have rendered the creation of the Bank of England, twenty-seven years later, unnecessary.

That the doctrine of Appropriation of Supply owes more to Downing than to anyone else has long been known from the account of that great historian, Lord Clarendon.[1]

Clarendon also attempted to describe, though in a spirit of extreme hostility, Downing's idea of a National Exchequer Bank. But partly on account of his lack of sympathy with the idea, and partly owing to the absence—until Dr. Shaw's brilliant researches filled the gap—of relevant documents explaining the transaction, Downing's part in it could not adequately be understood merely from the account given by Lord Clarendon.

In order to appreciate the labours of Downing in the realm of National Finance it is necessary to take a bird's-eye view of the financial situation of 1665–1671.

The equivalent in 1665 of to-day's normal Budget revenue was the sum of £1,200,000 which Parliament had voted in 1661 as Charles II's annual income for his reign. The Government was wholly and solely the King's Government: Ministers were responsible to the King, and not to Parlia-

[1] Lord Clardendon's *Continuation*, Vol. II, pp. 594–610, edition of 1761.

ment. Neither organized Parties nor collective Cabinet responsibility existed. The £1,200 000 was intended to defray the cost of the Navy, of the Army, of Ambassadors, of the Judicial System, of such Civil Service as there was, and, of course, of the King and Court.

Now this revenue, which came chiefly from Customs and Excise, Crown Lands, and the Hearth Tax, never, during the first half of Charles' reign actually realized an average sum of £900,000.[1] Sir George Downing, speaking in the House of Commons on April 5, 1670, said he could not "by all his Arithmetic, make the King's revenue above £900,000 a year."[2] Of this sum the peace-time cost of the Navy alone, said Downing, was £400,000 a year.

Thus, in respect of the normal peace-time revenue, Charles II was faced every year with a shortage of about one quarter of the total theoretic annual revenue voted him by Parliament. The reader has only to transfer this state of affairs, in imagination, to the financial year 1925–26 to see how ghastly a problem would confront the present Chancellor of the Exchequer. But this was not all. Extraordinary charges, such as the cost of the disbandment of Cromwell's army, and the cost of the Dutch War were met by special Parliamentary votes. These special votes, however, taken over the first eleven and a half years of Charles's reign, did not, when added to the normal revenue, bring the whole above £1,340,000 net per annum. Dr. Shaw estimates the total expenditure added together during all these years at £20,238,000 and the total gross revenue from every conceivable source, including loans, the Queen's dowry, and the sale of Crown Lands at £18,056,000. Thus in 1671 the King was in debt to the extent of £2,182,000.[3] This was the actual debt, which was bound to accumulate even in peace time, at the rate

[1] *Calendar of Treasury Books*, Vol. I (1660–67), p. xxxv, and Vol. III (1669–72), Pt. I, p. xi (Dr. Shaw's prefaces).

[2] Grey's *Debates*, Vol. I (1667–71), p. 269.

[3] *Calendar of Treasury Books*, Vol. III, Pt. I, pp. xii–xiii and p. xxxi.

of £300,000 to £400,000 a year, assuming that the normal revenue of £1,200,000 did not produce more than £900,000; assuming also that the normal expenditure was not drastically curtailed.

The modern reader must inevitably be astonished at two aspects of this state of affairs. He would suppose that the ghastly annual deficits in the normal revenue would be made good, either by increased taxation or diminished expenditure in order that the Budget might balance. As to diminished expenditure that was impossible; £1,200,000 was not adequate to meet the ordinary charges. Then why not increased taxation? The answer is twofold. Firstly, the country had been greatly exhausted by Cromwell's imperialistic regime, and it was felt by Restoration Statesmen to be imperative to lighten burdens, not maintain them. Nevertheless, though even the Restoration Tax-payer thought he was overburdened, it is impossible to escape the conclusion that, in reality, relatively to his modern brother, he lived in a Tax-payer's garden of Eden.

An illuminating remark by Sir George Downing himself illustrates this point. Downing is writing to Secretary Nicholas from the Hague on $\frac{28}{8}$ Feb./March 1661/2. He is horrified to hear that the Government is proposing to sell Dunkirk, for at heart Downing was a Cromwellian Imperialist. For his part, he says, he would even let the King have "one or two per cent of ye little I have in ye world, as long as I live, then y^{t} he should want where wth all to maintain this place."[1] Now Dunkirk cost, according to Clarendon, over £120,000 a year to maintain,[2] or about one-tenth of the total revenue both ordinary and extraordinary.

If Sir George Downing, already a very rich man, were alive to-day, he would almost certainly be paying at least 30 per cent., and possibly 40 per cent. of his income in direct taxation. As it was, it is improbable, that on an average, taking the war and peace years of Charles's long

[1] *B.M. Egerton MSS.*, 2538, ff. 35–6.

[2] Clarendon, *Continuation*, Vol. II, p 385.

reign, he paid in direct taxes as much as 2 per cent. of his annual income.[1]

Secondly, in the absence of a Ministry in the modern sense, and in the presence of an entirely irresponsible Parliament it was impossible to convince the Country that it ought to find the King more than it was already finding, whether by way of ordinary or extraordinary revenue.

The second aspect which will strike the reader is the relative smallness of the King's debt even in 1671, a debt which one would naturally suppose could very easily be funded. Now funding a National Debt, though well understood in Holland—De Witt had carried out an excellent funding scheme based on a period of forty-one years[2] in 1655—was utterly unknown in England. Indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that the whole idea of National Credit upon which Funding depends was practically unknown in Restoration England.

It was here that Sir George Downing came in with all his experience of Dutch Finance. His purpose was to break down the conservative barriers which surrounded the Treasury. One of the chief of these barriers has not yet been described : it was this. Owing to the fact that the revenue came in with snail-like slowness, while the expenditure, as it always is, is immediate and rapid, the Government had to rely for ready money partly on letting the taxes out to farm—the farmers paying an advance on

[1] It must be remembered firstly, that there was no regular income tax though the special monthly assessments to meet recurrent financial crises were in the nature of an income tax while they lasted ; secondly, that the Assessors were local men not likely to overvalue their own and their neighbours' property ; thirdly, that there was no systematic, if indeed any, verification of resources ; fourthly and probably consequently, that none of the various taxes brought in their estimated yield. Readers interested in this subject will find something about it in Stephen Dowell's *History of Taxation*, Vol. II, chapter ii, and Vol. III, pp. 72–81, and of course, in Pepys's *Diary*, passim. Thus Pepys put by £10 for his Poll Tax in 1660, but was only charged 12*s.* and thought "I am not bound to discover myself" (Vol. I, p. 284).

[2] Pontalis, *De Witt*, I, 226–9.

the farm, say, of the Customs—and partly on exceedingly short-term loans at high interest made by the Bankers—chiefly Goldsmiths, on the security of the immediately accruing revenue.

Sir George Downing did not propose to modify the tax-farming system, but he did propose to break through the Bankers' ring, and to appeal direct to the monied citizen to lend his money to the King on the security of particular taxes.

Despite the bitter opposition of Lord Clarendon, Downing's scheme, which was thoroughly approved by the wise Charles, was carried through, and was embodied in an Act of Parliament at the end of October, 1665. Very briefly the scheme was this. The additional aid of £1,250,000 then voted by the Commons in aid of the Dutch War was to be solely appropriated to the purpose of the War, so that not a penny should be available out of the aid for any other part of the King's service. This is the modern beginning—for there had been spasmodic Parliamentary precedents for appropriation in the Middle Ages, and even later—of the constitutional doctrine of Appropriation of Supply.[1] Secondly, persons making loans, whether in money or kind, to the Exchequer were to have their loans at 6 per cent. interest registered in turn, repayable in the order of precedence in which the loan had been made. The Auditor of the Receipt was to keep a Register in which each man could see where he stood on the list for repayment. His warrant for repayment would be transferable on endorsement. This last-named provision alone—in effect introducing paper money—was revolutionary : hitherto wooden tallies had acknowledged payments and loans into the Exchequer, and one could not endorse a tally. Lastly, Sir George Downing, Teller of the Exchequer[2]—a post he had held since Cromwell's

[1] See Maitland's *Constitutional History of England*, pp. 309–10.

[2] The Teller of the Exchequer, as the name implies, received the actual cash which came into the Exchequer from the Tax Gatherers, and others.

day, though in that day it was virtually a sinecure—was to receive the loans as they came in.[1]

The scheme, in practice, though not a sensational success, was emphatically a success.[2] That it was not even more successful than it was in bringing in ready money on loan was, doubtless, due mainly to this : that the notion of credit, and the notion of investment were as yet quite unfamiliar to the majority even of intelligent citizens. No one will accuse the Secretary of the Admiralty, Mr. Samuel Pepys, of lack of intelligence. Yet Pepys kept a large quantity of his fortune in gold either hidden in his house, or—in consequence of the Dutch raid up the Thames in 1667—buried in his garden.[3]

Even a century later, on May 17, 1771, another Diarist casually records how he found " in cash in all the places " of Ansford Parsonage the sum of £518 9*s.* 6*d.*—the equivalent to-day of about £2,500—which had been left there by the late Rector, the Reverend Samuel Woodforde, the Diarist's father.[4]

Nevertheless, though Pepys thought his own house, and on occasion his garden, more secure than either the Exchequer or a Bank, it is only fair to him to say that he thoroughly approved of Downing's scheme : he actually lent the very large sum of £1,900 to the great merchant Sir W. Warren, on the strength of a registered order under the Act, endorsed by Warren entitling Pepys to repay-

[1] I base this brief account of the scheme of the Act 17, Car. II, c. I, and the administrative regulations thereunder on two Essays by Dr. W. A. Shaw : the one in Vol. XVI of *The Economic Journal* for March, 1906, called *The Treasury Order Book* ; the other in Historical Essays (Manchester University Press, 1906), called the *Beginnings of the National Debt.*

[2] See the figures of loans given in Dr. Shaw's Essay on the National Debt referred to in footnote above, and in his Preface to the 3rd Vol., Pt. I, of the *Calendar of Treasury Books.*

[3] Pepys' *Diary,* Vol. IV, 322 ; Vol. V, 334 ; Vol. VI, 357 : 1923 edition.

[4] *The Diary of a Country Parson, the Reverend James Woodforde,* 1758–1781, edited by the present writer ; published by the Oxford University Press, 1924.

ment with interest. This was in April, 1666. Later on, in August, 1667, for the principle of 1665 had been extended to other finance Acts, when the financial crisis owing to the war had become more acute he became alarmed, and only lent a further £300 under a species of moral compulsion. This compulsion was applied by Sir George Downing who told Pepys he would "make all the Exchequer Officers, of one side and t'other, to lend the King money upon the Act."[1]

The experiment, also, of official paper money for large sums was, while it lasted, of great convenience, and was employed, with adaptations, by the Treasury as a ready method of meeting the claims, for instance, of the Paymasters of the Forces, Naval or Military.[2] But the virtual though temporary national bankruptcy of 1672—historically known as the "stop of the Exchequer," in effect the postponement of repayment of the Bankers' loans, though two and a half years later the payment of interest at 6 per cent. on these loans was resumed—prevented the Downing idea of a National Exchequer Bank from taking root.[3] Twenty years later, when the public had become more familiar with the principles of credit and investment, and the Treasury itself wiser as to the basis of these principles, the idea suffered a sea-change and re-emerged in a twofold form: on the one hand in the funding of the National Debt, on the other in the creation of the Bank of England.

It has been pointed out that Lord Clarendon was extremely hostile to Sir George Downing's scheme. His attitude was so consistent, so brilliantly expressed, and so illuminating in its interpretation of history and of humanity,

[1] Pepys' *Diary*, V, 161, 164, 167, 181, 245, 273–4, 338, 349; VI, 70–1, 139, 228; VII, 74–5, 81–2, 1923. Ed.

[2] See Dr. Shaw's Essay in the *Economic Journal* referred to in the footnote on p. 207.

[3] For the Stop of the Exchequer, and the failure of the National Bank idea the reader should consult Dr. Shaw's Preface to the 3rd Vol., Pt. I, *Calendar of Treasury Papers*, 1669–72.

that it must certainly be considered. Let us, therefore, forthwith, attend one of the most remarkable Cabinet Councils which, doubtless, has ever been held.[1]

The Lord High Chancellor of England, Lord Clarendon, who was, in effect, Prime Minister, was suffering, in October, 1665, from a very bad attack of the gout. He was, indeed, confined to his bed at Worcester House. This, however, did not prevent the holding of the Cabinet meeting; Charles II, with his usual courtesy and consideration for his chief Minister, simply said that the meeting should be held in the Lord Chancellor's bedroom. The meeting was held: present, the King and the Duke of York, Lord Clarendon in bed, the Lord Treasurer—good old Lord Southampton—who "though indisposed and apprehensive of the Gout, could yet use his Feet"; the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord Ashley, Secretary Bennet, now Lord Arlington, the Duke of York's Secretary, Sir William Coventry, the Attorney-General and the Solicitor, and last, but not least, to answer objections to his far-reaching proposals, Sir George Downing.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, opened the attack on Sir George Downing; he would have "enlarged with some sharpness" upon Sir George himself had not the King cut him short by saying that the whole scheme was entirely approved by him, and that he had himself lobbied not a few members of both Houses in its favour. Therefore Lord Ashley confined his observations to reasoned objections.

The objections, in brief, were twofold: firstly, the "Novelty" of the notion of Appropriation of Supply; secondly, the ill consequences of offending the Bankers. As to "Novelty" of Appropriation, and its dangerous possibilities as a precedent, undermining the Royal Prerogative, Charles dismissed this objection as quite unsub-

[1] There was, of course, no Cabinet in the modern sense, composed of Ministers responsible to Parliament. The Cabinet was the King's Cabinet, in which he presided. Nevertheless, the modern Cabinet's ancestor was this Royal Cabinet.

stantial. " He was," says Clarendon, " a great Lover of New Inventions and thought them the effects of Wit and Spirit, and fit to control the superstitious Observation of the Dictates of our Ancestors : so that Objection made little Impression."

Moreover, what did it matter if Appropriation became the rule provided that " the Establishment of his Bank " which was part and parcel of the proposal, really filled his empty Treasury ? It was argued by the opposers that the Bank idea was a " Chimera," and presupposed a perpetual debt (in fact a National Debt) which would be " very ill Husbandry." Then Lord Clarendon proceeds :

" Yet all Discourse against a Bank was thought to proceed from pure Ignorance. And Sir George was let loose to instruct them how easy it was to be established, who talked imperiously ' of the Method by which it came to be settled in Holland by the Industry of very few Persons, when the greatest Men despaired of it as impracticable ; yet the Obstinacy of the other prevailed, and it was now become the Strength, Wealth and Security of the State : That the same would be brought to pass much more easily here, and would be no sooner done, than England would be the Seat of all the Trade of Christendom.' And then assuming all He said to be Demonstration, He wrapped himself up according to his Custom, in a Mist of Words that Nobody could see Light in, but They who by often hearing the same Chat thought They understood it."

Then there was the practical objection that the scheme would prevent the Bankers from being repaid for previous loans, as all the money under the Bill would be set aside for new loans from the Public—including, of course, the Bankers. Downing and his supporters, Arlington and Coventry, answered this by saying that the Bankers, who on other occasions they had represented as " Bloodsuckers," had already sufficient security in past taxes. As for the future, the King could dispense with the Bankers, because " this Act would be no sooner passed, but upon the Credit

of it Money would be poured into the Exchequer faster than it could be told."

Sir George Downing, supported by the King, Coventry and Arlington, won the day against the Die-Hards, and the scheme became law, as has already been described. Nevertheless, the Cabinet Council did not end without an extraordinary outburst from Lord Clarendon.

"In this Debate upon the insolent Behaviour of Downing in the Defence of that which could not be defended, and it may be out of the Extremity of the Pain which at that Time He endured in his Bed, the Chancellor had given some very sharp Reprehensions to Downing . . . and told him that it was impossible for the King to be well served whilst Fellows of his Condition were admitted to speak as much as they had a Mind to ; and that in the best Times such Presumptions had been punished with Imprisonment by the Lords of the Council, without the King's taking notice of it."

This indecorous outburst in his presence offended the King, who said nothing at the time, but later rebuked the Chancellor.[1]

Before leaving this affair there is one statement which must be made in justice to Clarendon. One of his objections was sound : it was this. The security of Banks, he argued, in republican countries like Holland, was the Republic itself ; in a Monarchy such as then existed in England, and such as his conservative mind envisaged in the future, with the Royal Prerogative unimpeded by Parliamentary controls, a National Bank would, in effect, be insecure because subject solely to the Royal Will.[2] That there was much weight in this argument is borne out by the fact that the Funding of the Debt, and the Bank of

[1] For the whole account of this business of the Bill, and the Cabinet Meeting see Clarendon's *Continuation*, Vol. III, pp. 592–612. Clarendon's biographer, Lister, points out (*Life of Clarendon*, Vol. II, pp. 310–16) that Clarendon confuses dates of the meeting of Parliament and so on—and is here and there inaccurate, but there is no reason to doubt the substance of the account, which, indeed, is confirmed by the facts, and by circumstantial evidence.

[2] Clarendon, *Continuation*, Vol. III, p. 601.

England itself were only instituted successfully after the Revolution of 1688, when, as Lord Macaulay points out, they became powerful securities of the Revolution. For men would not be willing to support the re-establishment of the absolute James II or his descendants, if their return meant, as it infallibly would, a counter-revolution in which the Fund, the Bank, and all their savings would disappear.[1]

There was a further objection to the scheme, as a permanent scheme, which the objectors saw, though only obscurely ; it was not based on sufficient security in the Revenue. Downing doubtless hoped that the Revenue would be adequately increased by Parliament, as Appropriation became the order of the day. But Parliament did not adequately increase the Revenue, and the scheme was not a permanent success largely on this account.[2]

Finally it is necessary to take note of an observation of Lord Clarendon in which he hints that Downing was influenced in making his proposals, because as a Teller of the Exchequer, the more money that passed through his hands the more fees he would get.[3] That Downing would benefit in this way is certainly true. Nevertheless, it is fantastic to suppose that this was the ground of a proposal which was thoroughly justified in itself, and which reflects the greatest credit on the " forward-looking " character of Downing's mind. Moreover, Downing was already a very rich man. For years he had been receiving a salary (now, of course, about to cease) of £1,500 as an Ambassador, together with his fees as an absentee Teller of the Exchequer. His official income of not less than £2,000 would probably equal an income of £14,000 to-day. That his official income was his only income is in the highest degree improbable. He was one of the greatest

[1] Macaulay's *History of England*, Vol. IV, pp. 324–5 and pp. 502–4, edition 1855.

[2] See the Preface by *Dr. Shaw* to the 3rd Vol., Pt. I, of the *Calendar of Treasury Books* (1669–72), passim.

[3] Clarendon, *Continuation*, Vol. III, p. 594.

authorities on Trade and Finance in the Kingdom,[1] and knew perfectly well how to invest money without burying it in his garden at East Hatley, or hiding it in a secret cupboard in his town house in St. Stephen's Court. He was notoriously miserly, and had certainly saved very large sums in the course of his highly successful career. That he would gain financially by his own proposals was doubtless not absent from his mind, but those proposals can stand on their own bottom without importing an unnecessary explanation.

It is now time to consider briefly another aspect of Downing's connection with National Finance—his career as an Administrator, as Secretary to the Treasury from 1667 to 1671. During the year—1666—intervening between the great Act concerning the Additional Aid, which has just been described, and his appointment in May, 1667, as Secretary to the Treasury—Downing was busied, as Teller of the Exchequer, in gathering in the loans under the Act. Two letters which he wrote during this period are notable. They are both dated January 1665/6, and addressed to Mr., afterwards Sir, Joseph Williamson, Lord Arlington's Secretary, and a Secretary of State ; at the moment, however, Williamson was busied with his very recent journalistic offspring—*The London Gazette*, which had begun its career at Oxford on account of the plague then raging in London.[2]

In the first letter Downing, who was then living in his house at Stephen's Court, Westminster, courageously indifferent to the plague, says that he is glad the King is pleased with the Act : " the thing will work, because it is founded on reason, and is for men's ease and security, both as to what is to be paid and received." In the second letter, after referring to the plague—three lately dead in West-

[1] Sir William Coventry, writing to Sir George Downing at the Hague on January 17, 1661/2, just prior to a discussion on Trade in the House of Commons, asks Downing's advice on a particular point, and adds, " I heartily wish you heere upon these occasions." *B.M. Add. MSS.*, 22,919, f. 186.

[2] See the account of Sir Joseph Williamson in the *D.N.B.*

minster, yet the city was wonderfully full, and he had never seen the Exchange fuller—Downing says that there should be a hint given in the *Gazette* that moneys daily come in, and goods are sold on the credit of the Act.[1]

On May 27, 1667, Sir George Downing's sometime clerk, Mr. Samuel Pepys, made the following entry in his immortal *Diary* : " I do hear that they (the new Commissioners of the Treasury) have chosen Sir G. Downing for their Secretary ; and I think in my conscience they have done a great thing in it ; for he is a business active man, and values himself upon having of things do well under his hand ; so that I am mightily pleased in their choice." [2]

About ten days before Pepys made this entry, the Lord Treasurer, the good old Earl of Southampton, weighed down with age, with infirmity, and with the vast burden and anxiety of public business, had sunk into his grave. On his death the King had put the Treasury into Commission—it had been in Commission in Cromwell's day, and spasmodically at various dates earlier in the century—the new Lords Commissioners being the Duke of Albemarle, General of the Forces ; Lord Ashley, Chancellor of the Exchequer ; Sir Thomas Clifford, Comptroller of the Household ; Sir William Coventry and Sir John Duncombe.

The Treasury and the Exchequer are to-day, to all intents and purposes, a single Department of State, theoretically under the control of Lords Commissioners, practically under the control of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Historically they were two separate, though closely associated, Departments, of which the elder was the Exchequer. From the earliest medieval times onward the Exchequer's functions were twofold, executive and judicial. It received and paid out the royal revenue, and, through its Court, it dealt with all judicial disputes which might arise in connection with those transactions.[3] In 1667 it performed—

[1] *Calendar of State Papers Dom.*, 1665–6, pp. 193 and 201.

[2] Pepys' *Diary*, Vol. VI, p. 320, edition 1923.

[3] Maitland's *Constitutional History of England*, pp. 68, 135, 392–3, and passim.

apart from the judicial functions which were dealt with by the Court of the Exchequer—the duties now performed by the Board of Inland Revenue, by the Paymaster-General, by the Controller and Auditor-General, and to some extent by the Bank of England. Meanwhile the Lord Treasurer's office, developing also in medieval times, though rather later than the Exchequer, gradually assumed administrative functions—the supervision of expenditure, the direction of the machinery of the Exchequer itself, the control of the Commissioners of Customs and Excise. These administrative functions were now about to be both thoroughly organized, and deliberately extended through the far-sighted ability and indefatigable energy of the new Secretary to the Lords Commissioners—Sir George Downing.

In the first place, it was necessary to initiate a satisfactory system of dealing with the growing volume of business with which the Treasury was concerned. No one who has the smallest acquaintance with Administration will question that the machinery of procedure is of fundamental importance. Unless papers and business are dealt with in a certain system, first of all there will be departmental confusion, then general inefficiency, and finally gross injustice to individual citizens ; in one word, chaos. Indeed, if the reader asks for a definition of Administration, I would answer in the words of Shakespeare—" the act of order."

It is necessary to emphasize this point, as it is a vulgar error to describe Administration under the concise parable of " Red Tape." That " Red Tape " exists both actually and parabolically is certainly true. But, to apply the Aristotelian doctrine of the good example and its perversion, it is essential to realize that " Red Tape " is simply the perversion of good Administration, just as, for instance, in the sphere of Politics, Mob Rule is the perversion of Democracy.

The record of the very first meeting of the Lords Commissioners for the transaction of business on May 27, 1667, shows at once that the animating energy of an adminis-

trator is at work. Hitherto there had been no compendious record of Treasury business : the Lord Treasurer wrote memoranda on the back of documents which, after execution, were subsequently collected together in appropriate volumes—prototypes, to some extent, of modern files. The main decisions of the New Commissioners were not to be so arranged : they were to be recorded in a book by Sir George Downing,

> " singly for registering the brief notes he should take for framing any orders upon or pursuing other their Lordships' directions ; which notes at their next meeting, and before they entered upon any new business, he should acquaint them with and what was done thereupon, and so from time to time what progress was made upon any directions then unperfected : that he should enter the names of the Commissioners present at every meeting and constantly observe this method." [1]

Thus was begun that Minute Book which, in the words of Dr. Shaw, is " pre-eminent among the Treasury records." It provided the Commissioners and the Secretary at once with a bird's-eye view of the frightful complexities of the Restoration financial machine, and situation.

Sir George Downing was " ordered " to keep this book, so runs Downing's own record of this decision : but this was a Secretarial euphemism ; doubtless the Secretary advised My Lords, and My Lords being sensible, concurred. Other " Books " or series of Books were started by Sir George Downing—the Letter Book, the Order Book, the Book for Warrants not relating to money, the King's Warrant Book, the Customs Book, the Irish Book. The Letter Book contained letters signed by the Secretary, carrying out My Lords' instructions. The Order Book was the record of money orders endorsed by My Lords and sent to the Tellers of the Exchequer, ordering them to pay—this book has a special significance because it helps to explain the transactions connected with Sir George Downing's loan scheme—already described—incorporated in the Act of 1665. The Book for Warrants not relating

[1] *Calendar of Treasury Books*, Vol. II (1667–8), p. 1.

to money was a miscellaneous record in series covering a multitude of business, warrants for release of prisoners, legal matters, leases of Crown lands and other matters relevant to Crown lands, letters relating to the Act of Navigation, to Acts for various Aids, to Hearth-money and to many other matters. The King's Warrant Book series contained the Privy Seals ordering My Lords to make payments of various kinds, pensions, free passing of Ambassadors' wines, and what not, in infinite variety. The Customs Book and the Irish Book dealt respectively with all matters relating to Customs collection, seizure of prohibited goods and so on, and to all matters relating to Ireland.[1]

Thus did Sir George Downing erect a scaffolding of order out of the confused mass of business handled, of old, haphazardly by the Lord Treasurer, and now systematically by My Lords.

Let us now attend one or two meetings of the Lords Commissioners, and observe the vital spirit—still vital in the original records, though for two and a half centuries he who was the embodiment of that vitality has been mingled with the dust.

Just as the first meeting of the new Commissioners for the transaction of business indicates the initiation of an ordered method of procedure, so does it show a vigorous determination to hew a path, if possible, through the financial jungle. Amongst other matters it was decided that the Secretary should write to the Auditor of the Receipt to know, " how far all the branches of the revenue or the extraordinaries given by Parliament are anticipated " ; similar accounts of receipts and liabilities are to be sent in by the Receivers of Customs, Excise, Hearth-money ; the several " great offices, viz. : Cofferer of the Household,

[1] I base this summary account on the brilliant prefaces contributed by Dr. Shaw to the *Calendar of Treasury Books*, specially the preface to the volume of 1729–30, in which Dr. Shaw gives a description of the Treasury Records, and the prefaces to Vols. I and II for the years 1660–7 and 1667–8, respectively.

Navy, household, Treasurer of the Chamber, Wardrobe, Works, Ordnance and Tangier," are to state their expenditure and liabilities from the date of the Restoration to the 25th inst. (May, 1667).[1]

It must be remembered that there was no annual Budget : the King's annual revenue—the theoretic £1,200,000 but the actual £800,000 or £900,000—was for his reign. It was one of the ghastly puzzles of seventeenth-century finance, that, owing to the immense variety, dispersedness, tortuous collection, and administration of the King's Revenue with roots buried in the centuries, it was impossible to find out what the situation precisely was. The King, his Ministers, and his officials knew there was a painful shortage of money : Parliament was also vaguely aware of it, but in the first place, in the absence of a Ministry responsible to Parliament, nothing was adequately explained ; in the second place, as Dr. Shaw points out, it was much easier to suspect corruption, malversation and mistresses than to find out the real cause and impose adequate taxation. The unamiable, though venial weakness, of the Restoration Parliament in this matter has passed to the modern memoir-writers ; it is simpler to describe Charles primarily as a rake, than to describe him—which is quite as true and much more important—as a brilliant politician hopelessly handicapped financially by a niggardly Parliament, as a sincere and knowledgable patron of Science and of the Arts, as a merciful man in an age which had odd notions both of toleration and of mercy ; it is easier and more delightful to chat about Mistresses than to write about Money ; in fine, it is certainly more alluring to gaze at the opulent beauty of Barbara Villiers or Nell Gwyn, than to inspect the records of the Treasury.

Then there was a meeting on May 30, 1667, memorable for a decision which is the foundation-stone of the modern fabric of Treasury control : " application," runs Sir George Downing's minute, " to be made to His Majesty that before any warrant be signed by His Majesty for

[1] *Calendar of Treasury Books*, Vol. II. (1667–8), p. 2.

issuing money or charging the revenue or making any grant of any part thereof my Lords be acquainted with the address made to His Majesty concerning it, and make their report of their opinion to him as to the matter of fact and as to the condition and present state of the revenue." The King granted this application, and the Secretaries of State were ordered to observe it.[1]

At the same meeting " the ordinary times for my Lords meeting " were fixed to be at 3 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and at 8 a.m. on Wednesdays and Fridays. " I do like the way of these Lords," wrote Pepys on June 3, 1667, " that they admit nobody to use many words, nor do they spend many words themselves, but in great state do hear what they see necessary, and say little themselves, but bid withdraw." Pepys had just delivered to them his Admiralty Accounts which My Lords, being busy, did not read themselves " but committed it to Sir George Downing."[2] It was true that the " great state " was not invariably maintained by every one of My Lords. Two days later Pepys waited on the Commissioners to get some money for the Maintenance of Tangier, and found Sir John Duncombe—who seems to have suffered from vanity —" lolling with his heels upon another chair, by that, that he sat upon " ; however, the Secretary of the Admiralty had " an answer good enough," which was the main point.[3]

It is entirely impossible to give more than a cursory view of Sir George Downing's labours at the Treasury from the spring of 1667 to the autumn of 1671. In the first place, space alone forbids ; in the second place, a detailed description of Sir George Downing's labours in the sphere of Administration would be better suited to a monograph on that subject, than to an essay in Biography ; in the third place, Dr. Shaw has cleared a way through the forest of original records in three quarto volumes of some seven hundred pages each, covering those four and a

[1] *Calendar of Treasury Books*, Vol. II (1667–8), pp. 2–3.
[2] Pepys' *Diary*, Vol. VI, pp. 329–30.
[3] Id., Vol. VI, p. 331.

half years in all their intricate and intimate financial detail.[1]

It remains, therefore, with lightning speed to travel through the years 1668–1671, pointing out to the reader on the way various aspects of Sir George Downing's labours in each of those years, observing also certain records which, though at first sight merely official, reveal to the discerning eye the personality of that very extraordinary being, the Secretary to the Lords Commissioners.

THE YEAR 1668.

Here is an illustration of the method of collecting such a tax as the new Wine Impositions, spread over two years, granted by Act of Parliament[2] early in 1668. The Barons of the Exchequer advised My Lords that it was illegal to let these taxes to farm in the normal way, that is, in effect, to put the collection of the tax up to auction, and to give the contract for collection to the highest bidder. Yet it was essential to get an advance of ready money at once. The Vintners' Company came to the rescue—a very expensive rescue as it turned out. On May 20, 1668, one, Mr. Wadlow, on their behalf came to see the Lords Commissioners. Sir George Downing gives a graphic summary of what Mr. Wadlow said. They were a very ancient Company, can search cellars by law, can advance money to the King on the strength of the Act, and do the work cheaper than anyone else; "can do all without distaste or disturbance, do more in five days than any other can do in six weeks." My Lords said it was illegal to put the tax out to farm: whereupon Mr. Wadlow: "he saith they will go any way; they will be collectors or farmers." Finally it was agreed that the Vintners Company should act—by a legal fiction this was not farming, they would advance at fixed dates £300,000 of the £310,000 provided for by the Act, and on the security of that Act;

[1] See the *Calendar of Treasury Books*—3 Vols., from 1667 to 1672, edited by Dr. W. A. Shaw, Litt.D.

[2] The First Wine Act, 19 & 20 Car. II, c. 6.

they were to have 10 per cent. interest (i.e., the legal rate of 6 per cent., plus a reward of 4 per cent.), and they were to have £23,000 for "charges" of collection. Parliament had estimated only £10,000 for collection. In the end the tax produced about £50,000 less than the estimate (this was an almost invariable feature of seventeenth-century taxation) and the actual advance loan to the Exchequer on Wines in 1668 appears to have amounted only to £228,753.[1]

The reader will remember the case of the poor prisoners of Zeeland, referred to in the preceding chapter. How or when these prisoners were released is not altogether clear. It seems, however, that the Dutch, after the Treaty of Breda, claimed that over £5,000 was due to them for the maintenance of the Zeeland prisoners alone, which the poverty-stricken English Government were not inclined to pay. Consequently a number of these prisoners took service under the Dutch Government who rewarded them handsomely.[2] Downing had been entrusted with £5,000 "for the release, exchange and transport of His Majesty's subjects who were prisoners in the United Netherlands." But he only expended £3,500. Therefore on November 5, 1668, he is instructed by My Lords to hand back £1,500 to the Exchequer. Then comes this incomparable parenthesis in the Minute on this matter, written by Downing himself: "so well did he husband that money."[3]

[1] *Calendar of Treasury Books*, Vol. II, pp. 322, 326, 572–3; Vol. III, pp. xxxv, and 669; *Owens College Historical Essays*, p. 400, essay by Dr. W. A. Shaw on the *Beginnings of the National Debt*.

[2] Pepys' *Diary*, Vol. VII, pp. 82 and 96–7.

[3] *Calendar of Treasury Books*, Vol. II, pp. 474–5. The reader must not jump to the conclusion that this economy was practised by Downing at the expense of the Zeeland prisoners. In a matter of this kind it is never safe to be certain unless all the intervening links of information are present, and in this case they are not. It should be noted, firstly, that, as Ambassador, Downing did all he could on behalf of the English Prisoners in Amsterdam and Rotterdam; secondly, that £1,500 in any case would not meet a bill of over £5,000, though it might have met a portion of it in 1666 when the Prisoners complained; thirdly, it appears from Pepys that the Dutch had more of our prisoners than we of theirs by the end of the war, and, fourthly,

THE YEARS 1669 AND 1670.

I select at random from the Minutes of the hundreds of meetings which My Lords held in these years, the following as illustrating the multifarious business dealt with by them and their Secretary.

Monday, August 2, 1669. At this meeting the Lords Commissioners dealt—amongst numerous other matters—with the disquieting situation of the arrears in respect of the produce of the property taxes—the Royal Aids granted by various Acts of Parliament. My Lords decide that letters in strong language (how Sir George Downing must have revelled in writing them) be sent to various Commissioners and Receivers-General in the several Counties; for example, the Bedford Receiver, Mr. Lewis Harding, is to present an account forthwith or he will be arrested; Mr. Snow, of London, to attend personally the day after to-morrow; "a sharp letter" for Mr. Cooper, of Nottingham; "a quickening letter" to Mr. Hosier, of Salop, and the same for Mr. Treday, of Somerset. Then Mr. Vaughan, Receiver of Cardigan and Carnarvon, was called in. Mr. Vaughan said he would "answer all" only he prayed for an allowance "for bringing the money to the waggons."[1] The reader is to realize that if he had been alive in 1669 it would have caused him no surprise whatever if a waggon had lumbered past his house guarded by soldiers, and filled with boxes of money for My Lords of the Treasury.

Monday, November 22, 1669. Mr. Kynaston, of the Signet Office, reveals to the Lords Commissioners that a Royal Warrant is on the point of issue to Alderman Blackwell, the great Banker, allowing him to export 40,000 or 50,000 guineas. My Lords are gratified with Mr. Kynaston's zeal, "and take it well that he did acquaint them

that Downing complained that the Government had not consulted him on any one point of the Treaty of Breda. See Pepys' *Diary* as in preceding footnote, and Clause X of the Treaty of Breda in Chalmers, *Collection of Treaties*, I, 137.

[1] *Calendar of Treasury Books*, Vol. III, Pt. I, 127–8.

with the said warrant, matters of this nature not being wont to pass but with the knowledge of the Treasury and they desire that he do forbear passing the said warrant until My Lords consent to it, and he have received My Lords' directions therein." [1]

Wednesday, November 15, 1669. At this meeting the King was present. He made a proposal about his Stables as to which he said he would speak to the Duke of Buckingham. It was agreed, as an economy, that the footmen's liveries should be worn again, as they had only been worn 14 days, when they had to change into mourning liveries for the Queen Mother's death. Also saddles used during the King's last progress must be used again.[2]

Wednesday, December 8, 1669. At this meeting Sir George Downing was instructed to confer with Sir R. Long, Auditor of the Receipt, and Sir C. Harbord, one of the Tellers of the Exchequer, as to devising some method whereby the Auditor of the Receipt could certify the Treasury quarterly what arrears were due from each Receiver, and Farmer of taxes, and what Imprest Accountants were behind in their accounts : this to be done " in order to avoid the great inconvenience and prejudice " to His Majesty under the present dilatory system.[3]

Monday, December 13, 1669. " Sir G. Downing to let the Duke of Monmouth have £500, according to the King's pleasure, to buy coach horses and My Lords will take care that the privy seal and warrant pass." At the afternoon meeting on this day the King and Duke of York were present. Charles II made an excellent joke. The Queen's jointure was under discussion—her Council asking that it might not be " made up out of dry rents." Whereupon the King " he will think of it, and must mind good husbandry." [4]

Wednesday, April 20, 1670. Memorandum by Sir

[1] *Calendar of Treasury Books*, Vol. III, Pt. I, 161.
[2] Id., Vol. III, Pt. I, 157.
[3] Id., Vol. III, Pt. I, 167–8.
[4] Id., Vol. III, Pt. I, 170.

George Downing : " Floyd to be with me to-morrow at seven in the morning about the establishment for Barbados, Lord Willoughby [the Governor] having promised to be there with me." [1]

Tuesday, April 26, 1670. " Sir G. Downing to inform the Treasurer of the Household where Mr. Tankard is to pay his £100 per annum every St. James's Day besides his service of carrying up the first dish of meat [to the King's table] and what he's in arrear of it . . ." [2]

Tuesday, May 17, 1670. " The Customs Farmers called in about the business of planting tobacco. Complaint to be made in the Privy Council against Mr. Carter for knowingly suffering tobacco to be planted in his garden. Mr. Lawrence to attend the Attorney General to know if he may not be prosecuted in the King's Bench." [3]

Wednesday, May 18, 1670. " . . . complaints have been made to My Lords of the extraordinary badness of the Pall Mall Street, being the great road from Charing Cross or Whitehall to St. James's, and considering how great a thoroughfare it is and to people of the greatest quality my Lords desire [Sir John Bennet and Sir William Poultney] to speak with the rest of the Justices and to take order the law be put in execution to speedily purge and mend the Pall Mall Street." [4]

August 3, 1670. At this meeting Sir Thomas Littleton and Sir Thomas Osborne, Joint Treasurers of the Navy, waited on My Lords, accompanied by the great Banker, Alderman Blackwell ; Alderman Blackwell, indeed, was a very frequent attendant at the Treasury in these years. The Alderman promised to lend £15,000 required for the fleet in the Straits, on the security of the new farm of the Customs.[5] For this loan the Banker would get 6 per cent. interest, plus 4 per cent. gratuity plus charges.[6] Two

[1] *Calendar of Treasury Books*, Vol. III, Pt. I, 410.
[2] Id., Vol. III, Pt. I, 418.
[3] Id., Vol. III, Pt. I, 433.
[4] Id., Vol. III, Pt. I, 435.
[5] Id., Vol. III, Pt. I, 491.
[6] Owens College Historical Essays : *The Beginnings of the National Debt*, by Dr. W. A. Shaw, p. 415.

days later the Treasury made a manful effort to reduce the actual rate of interest to the legal rate of 6 per cent. for all future loans.[1] But this attempt broke down.[2]

From August 17, 1670, to October 2, 1671, the Treasury Minute Book is missing, but Dr. Shaw has reconstructed the story of this period from Sir George Downing's Memoranda. It is not, however, necessary to continue these examples of Treasury labours in this, the last year of Downing's Secretaryship, for the reader has already been able to form some idea of their multitude and variety. Suffice it to say that in this time Sir George Downing was occupied with matters wonderfully diverse both in importance and in kind, from Instructions to the Farmers of the Excise how to express their accounts, to a search in Lord Treasurer Southampton's papers as to the Warrants for felling of woods in the New Forest, and whether the bark of the trees was ever sold "and accompted to His Majesty's use."[3]

It remains to record that early in October, 1671, Sir Robert Howard succeeded Sir George Downing as Secretary to the Treasury. The change was made because the time was at hand when Sir George Downing's diplomatic services were again to be required. Moreover, Sir Robert Howard had been a critic of the King's Government in the House of Commons, and it was desirable to buy him off, so Dr. Shaw suggests, with a lucrative post. To the Editor of the Treasury Archives the event is still a matter for tears, for he states that "this change in Treasury Officials synchronises with a deplorable break in the Treasury Records."[4]

Finally it should be explained that though Sir George Downing (as also Sir Robert Howard) was a Member of Parliament during the whole time that he was Secretary to the Treasury, it must not be imagined that he is there-

[1] *Calendar of Treasury Books*, Vol. III, Pt. I, 492.

[2] Id., Vol. III, Pt. I, 740; thus on May 2, 1671, the Treasurers of the Navy were allowed to borrow at 10 per cent.

[3] May, 1671: *Calendar of Treasury Books*, Vol. III, Pt. I, pp. 740 and 745–6.

[4] *Calendar of Treasury Books*, Vol. III, Pt. II, 939.

fore the spiritual ancestor of the present Financial Secretary rather than of the present Permanent Secretary. Though Sir George Downing made speeches in the House of Commons on Finance, as has been seen, he did not make them as a Member of a Ministry responsible to Parliament, for such a Ministry did not then exist. Moreover, his Parliamentary duties appear to have been occasional, whereas his administrative duties were unquestionably constant. In truth, from Downing and from Pepys descends that unique element in the English Constitution, the power and importance of which Walter Bagehot was the first to recognize, the permanent Civil Service.

Sir George Downing probably received only a small fixed salary as Secretary to the Treasury, but it cannot be doubted that fees more than made up for any deficit on this head. Moreover, not only did he continue to enjoy his emoluments as a Teller of the Exchequer, but he received further remuneration for his special labours as an Administrator of the Estate of the late Queen Mother, and also in connection with the sale of Crown Property —those fee farms which Charles II was compelled to sell in order to carry on the service of the Government.[1]

Modern Civil Servants may well regret that the seventeenth-century fee system is no longer in fashion—and not merely fees, but gifts as well. Thus on July 24, 1696, Mr. Secretary Lowndes received from a protégé whom he had appointed Receiver General of casual Revenue in Barbados " a few sweetmeats," and the gift was accompanied by a statement that the Receiver General designed also to send his patron " all sorts of sauces."

The fat fees and emoluments which Sir George Downing pocketed during his administrative career still fructify : indeed, the Master and Fellows of Downing College, Cambridge, should nightly drink Sir George's health. For, though it is to his grandson that the College owes its foundation, it is to Sir George Downing's accumulated wealth that that foundation owes its solid financial basis.

[1] *Calendar of Treasury Books,* Vol. III, Pt. II, 778, 912, 937.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

THE THIRD DUTCH WAR: SIR GEORGE DOWNING'S LAST DIPLOMATIC MISSION, TOGETHER WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF LIFE IN HOLLAND IN JANUARY AND FEBRUARY, 1672, BY VARIOUS HANDS.

In every land
I saw, wherever light illumineth,
Beauty and anguish walking hand in hand,
The downward slope to death.
—TENNYSON: *A Dream of Fair Women*, ls. 13–16.

But—a stirring thrills the air
Like to sounds of joyance there
That the rages
Of the ages
Shall be cancelled, and deliverance offered from the darts that were,
Consciousness the Will informing, till It fashion all things fair!
—THOMAS HARDY: *The Dynasts*, the concluding Chorus.

THE biographer of any individual Diplomatist or Statesman of the Restoration is at present confronted with a difficulty which it is high time the History Schools of the various Universities should remove. That difficulty arises from the simple fact that there is no adequate History of the Reign of Charles II. In other words, the general background against which the individual has to be depicted is still confused, obscure, and even in part invisible. That which Professor Gardiner and Professor Firth have done for the reign of Charles I and the Cromwellian period, and which Lord Macaulay more than half a century ago did for the reign of James II

and the Revolution still requires to be done for the reign of Charles II. The patient, brilliant and profoundly important research which has been accomplished by Dr. Shaw in his many-volumed *Calendar of Treasury Books*, alone compels very different conclusions as to the relations, for instance, between Charles II and his Parliament, from those which will be found in the most reputable histories. Those researches prove beyond dispute that the financial difficulties of the reign—and it is not necessary to observe that money is the mainspring of almost all political and material activity—were due not to Charles's extravagance, but to the reluctance of the Parliament to impose adequate taxation ; that Charles ran desperately into debt to maintain the British Navy and the honour of England ; that the charges of incompetent and mal-administration are, for the most part, without foundation.

Again—in the sphere of Diplomacy—too much attention has, perhaps, been paid to the endless diplomatic dispatches of Louis XIV's Ambassadors, and too little attention to the dispatches of other foreign Ministers, and even of English Diplomatists and Statesmen. Further, the fatal habit of writing History backwards has played havoc with truth ; the attitude of an Historian so distinguished as Bishop Burnet—whose history was not begun, apparently, till 1683—is doubtless inevitably influenced by his knowledge of what happened later.

Thus the menace to the liberties of Europe which loomed from France was but as a fitful though increasingly uneasy dream between 1660 and 1674 compared with the positive and perpetual nightmare which it became after 1674. Yet if Charles II is to be fairly judged, his reign must be studied mainly from the facts of each year, and not from the developments of a later period. The consequence of the opposite process has resulted, for instance, in a tendency to regard Charles II's anti-Dutch policy up to 1674 as something almost devilish. Nevertheless, the feelings of any ordinary Englishman, or Dutchman of the dominant De Witt Party, in the year 1671, corresponded

in some measure with the mutual sentiments of a German and a Frenchman in 1871.[1]

No one will accuse Sir William Temple of anti-Dutch bias. He has come down to fame as the noble eulogist of the United Provinces and of De Witt, and as the architect of the Triple Alliance of England, the United Provinces and Sweden of 1668, which in effect compelled Louis XIV to postpone his budding imperialistic activities. In the year 1671 Sir William Temple wrote for the edification of one of His Majesty's principal Secretaries of State a survey of the then European situation. This survey, which incidentally contains some of the wisest *obiter dicta* ever made by any statesman, summarizes the various possibilities of the diplomatic situation in 1671. On the one hand, there is France with her great military power ; on the other, " in the United Provinces, the greatest numbers both of ships and mariners that were ever yet heard of under any state in the world ; and which have hitherto been only awed by the strength of our oak, the art of our ship-wrights, and chiefly by the invincible hearts of our seamen." He reflects that the alliance of France and Holland, or the submission of Holland to France, will " prove the nearest approach that was ever made to our ruin and servitude." Finally he propounds three alternatives from the standpoint of England's interest : either present peace, England being allied with the Dutch ; or secondly, neutral England encouraging France to invade Holland ; or thirdly, France and England jointly attacking Holland. The first may lead to France and Holland outpacing England in prosperity ; the second might lead to our advantage, or it might lead to a realization by France and Holland that England was profiting by their buffetings, and so to a mutual alliance against England. As to the third alternative, the whole question is whether

[1] It appears to me that the great German Historian, Leopold Von Ranke, presents Dutch and English relations from 1660–74 more fairly than any English Historian, with the exception of Sir John Seeley, to whose illuminating *Growth of British Policy*, Vol. II, I refer the reader.

France or England would reap more benefit by Holland's ruin. Sir William Temple wisely leaves the conclusion of these matters to Ministers. At the same time the careful reader is able to perceive that he preferred the first alternative, namely peace and alliance with the Dutch, whatever risks it might bring.[1]

Even Sir William Temple, therefore, realized that in his pro-Dutch policy there were risks, seeing how immensely powerful the Dutch were. To his contemporary, Sir George Downing, on the other hand, the Dutch, as has been made abundantly clear in this biography, were, as near as may be, as dangerous as the devil.

Considering these matters in the year 1925 the reader is certainly impelled to agree with Sir William Temple rather than with Sir George Downing. Nevertheless, it is more than doubtful if the reader would have agreed with Sir William Temple in 1671, nor is it by any means certain that England's subsequent and present power in the world owes more to the serene political sagacity of Sir William Temple, or to the pugnacious commercial and administrative ability of Sir George Downing.

In order to understand the object of Sir George Downing's third and last diplomatic mission to the Hague from December, 1671 to February, 1672, it is necessary to take a rapid bird's-eye view of events between the second and third Dutch Wars.

The second Dutch War had ended in the peace of Breda of July 21/31, 1667. The peace favoured the Dutch, as the Navigation Act was slightly relaxed on their account; each side retained its colonial captures, the English, New York, the Dutch, Surinam, but the Dutch were finally allowed to keep Poleroon which, as Downing had observed in 1664? "hath been a restoring by them ever since the year 1622."

England in the naval battles of 1665 and 1666 had had the advantage on the whole, but the plague of 1665-6, the Great Fire of London, September, 1666, the entry of

[1] Temple, *Works*, Vol. II, 205–228 (ed. 1770).

France into the War on the side of the Dutch in 1666, finally the inadequate financial measures taken by Parliament had made it impossible for the Government to carry on the War.

The War did not end before De Ruyter had performed his Thames exploit, capturing Sheerness, burning several of the finest English men-of-war at Chatham, and carrying off the prize of the whole fleet—the *Royal Charles*. It is essential to bear this exploit in mind, in considering the origin of the third Dutch War. Only by reading contemporary letters, Diaries and reports can the reader form any adequate idea of the ghastly humiliation it meant for all Englishmen, and particularly to Charles and the Duke of York, who were devoted to the Royal Navy.[1]

The Dutch would have triumphed even more spectacularly than they did had not the proceedings of their ally, Louis XIV, filled them with alarm. For France in the summer of 1667 attacked the Spanish Low Countries. Neither Holland nor England could tolerate Louis XIV in Flanders, and there ensued early in 1668 the defensive alliance negotiated by Sir William Temple and De Witt between the United Provinces and England, followed immediately by the Triple Alliance of England, Holland and Sweden, of which the primary object, in effect, was the preservation of the Low Countries. The Low Countries substantially were saved, and Louis made peace with Spain in April–May, 1668, at Aix-la-Chapelle.

The dictum of Lord Acton that the Triple Alliance "was a popular but totally ineffective measure"[2] is only an illustration of the bewildering difficulties which confront the pilgrim in search of historical truth at this period. It is true that Lord Macaulay more than fifty years ago took a precisely opposite view in his famous essay on Sir

[1] The accounts given by Pepys in his *Diary* are well known; even more illuminating is the marshalled series of original documents contained in Dr. Colenbrander's *Bescheiden uit Vreemde Archieven omtrent de Groote Nederlandsche Zeeoorlogen* 1652–1676, I, 548–603.

[2] Acton, *Lectures on Modern History*, p. 210.

William Temple. But to the student the conflict of eminent historians is of little comfort. All that Sir George Downing's biographer can say is that from such study as he has been able to make of these years he emphatically agrees with Lord Macaulay.[1]

No sooner had peace been made at Aix-la-Chapelle than Louis XIV and Charles II set to work secretly to prepare the way for ultimate vengeance on the Dutch. For the Dutch were now almost the arbiters of Europe.[2] They had humiliated Charles II through the exploit of the Thames, and they had checkmated Louis XIV through the Triple Alliance. Swollen with that insolence which makes triumph at once odious to contemporaries and ridiculous to posterity, they minted victory medals insulting to the two Monarchs. In one the eminent Dutch diplomatist, Van Beuninghen was represented as Joshua arresting the progress of the Sun (Louis XIV) ; in another a figure in abject overthrow, closely resembling Charles II, was represented with the inscription *procul hinc mala bestia regnis*.[3]

Throughout 1668 and 1669 the two Monarchs as "gentleman to gentleman"[4] clandestinely plotted and

[1] Lord Acton's view coincides with that of Dr. Lingard, and of certain French historians. But not all French historians have taken this view ; the great French scholar Mignet does full justice to the effect of the Triple Alliance : *Négociations relatives à la succession d'Espagne*, III, 3–4. From Miss Barbour's careful study of *Arlington*—see specially chapter vii—it is clear that Louis XIV in December, 1667, was endeavouring to secure Charles's neutrality while he gobbled up Flanders. The Temple Treaties with the Dutch of January, 1668, completely surprised the French Ambassador in London. Finally it may be asked why did Louis spend three years of ceaseless diplomacy in disintegrating the Triple Alliance, if he did not profoundly fear it ?

[2] The main reason for attacking the Dutch specifically stated in the Secret Treaty of Dover (Clause 5) was that the Dutch Republic "même a l'audace de se vouloir aujourd'hui ériger en souverain arbitre et juge de tous les autres potentats."

[3] Mignet, *Négociations*, etc., III, 5 ; Wicquefort, *Histoire des Provinces Unies*, IV, 230 ; Pontalis, *De Witt*, II, 129.

[4] Needless to say this was the wicked but witty Charles's phrase. Mignet, *Négociations*, etc., III, 10.

counter-plotted. At last on December 18, 1669, emerged the first draft of that secret Treaty which substantially assumed definitive form at Dover on May 22/June 1, 1670. Charles was to become a Catholic, Louis providing him with a large sum of money, and some regiments, in case his subjects might object to their King's conversion ; the time of announcement of this conversion was to be absolutely in the discretion of Charles. The pride of the United Provinces was to be humbled by a united attack, Louis paying Charles further large sums for this purpose. The Treaties of Triple Alliance and Aix-la-Chapelle were to be maintained; in other words, Louis was not to attack the Low Countries.[1]

This provision is of great importance. Charles has been notoriously abused for abandoning both the Dutch and the Triple Alliance. He certainly abandoned the Dutch and the Triple Alliance, as an Alliance, ceased to exist. But the main point of that alliance was the security of the Low Countries : that point was maintained by Charles : Louis and Charles might treat as " gentleman to gentleman," but the French gentleman was never to be trusted on the Flanders Coast.

Such were the main provisions of that secret Treaty which has excited historians almost, if not quite, to madness, and which has caused Charles II—who in the England of his own day was personally one of the most popular Kings the country ever had—to be represented to posterity as a traitor, almost as odious as Iago.[2]

Whether Charles II ever intended Clause II of the

[1] For the course of the negotiations and the text of the secret Treaty see Mignet, *Négociations*, etc., III, 4–23, 117–23 and 187–99; Miss Barbour's *Life of Arlington*, ch. ix, gives some account of the part of the various English Ministers.

[2] The prejudice against Charles II has reached such a pass that even so fairminded and excellent an historian as Mr. G. M. Trevelyan loses his balance and becomes personal : in his *England under the Stuarts* (p. 330) he refers to Charles II on one occasion as " he of the thick lips." One might just as well refer to Cromwell as " he of the great nose," or to Henry VIII as " he of the unbounded stomach."

Treaty—the conversion Clause—to be taken seriously, —and I defy any reader with even a moderate sense of humour to read it without laughter—need not be discussed here.[1] But certain facts—quite apart from speculations and suspicions—are incontrovertible : first, Charles never did announce his conversion ; secondly, Louis never sent any troops to England ; thirdly, by far the greater part of the money Charles received from Louis went at once to the naval and military services—particularly to the Navy[2] ; fourthly, Louis and Charles did attack the Dutch in the spring of 1672.

Indeed, so far as facts as distinct from speculations are concerned, the Dover Treaty was a plot by Louis and Charles not against the religion and liberties of England, but against the power and prosperity of the Dutch. That this plot against the Dutch must appear horrible to modern men is inevitable, nor was it by any means approved by the noblest minds of that age. Nevertheless, in condemning Charles and Louis let us also be fair, and consider the following facts :

I. Secret diplomacy in the seventeenth century was extremely secret and terribly tortuous, whether it was practised by Charles II or by a Jan de Witt. Thus De Witt, though England and the United Provinces were closely allied by the January Treaties of 1668, secretly proposed to Louis XIV, in May of this same year, that France and the United Provinces should combine to compel Charles II to make certain concessions in the matter of England's immemorial rights to the salute at sea. These proposals, and others relating to the Low Countries, came to Charles's knowledge and did not tend to ingratiate

[1] Dr. Lingard suspects both Louis and Charles of insincerity in the matter of the conversion (*History of England*, Vol. IX, 186–7 and footnote) ; lest it be suspected that this is a Catholic view, I hasten to add that I am a Protestant.

[2] See the account of these, and other monies from Louis XIV to Charles II given on pp. lxiv–v of Dr. Shaw's preface to the 3rd Volume of Pt. I of the *Calendar of Treasury Books*, 1669–72.

the eminent Dutch Statesman with the King of England.[1]

II. The combination of the Dutch and the French in 1666—following on De Witt's alliance with France of April, 1662—nearly brought England to ruin.

III. The combination of the Dutch and England in 1667-8 checkmated Louis XIV.

IV. Both England and France, after these painful experiences, were intensely jealous lest either country should ally itself secretly with the Dutch for offensive purposes against the other.

V. The poignant humiliation of De Ruyter's deadly raid of June, 1667, could not quickly be forgotten. Nor did the Dutch assist the blessed cause of oblivion by their victory medals, by the display of the *Royal Charles*, and by the flaunting picture in the Town Hall of Dordrecht which depicted Cornelius De Witt crowned by victory amid the burning wrecks of Chatham. The Dutch eventually toned down these exhibitions, but too tardily.[2]

VI. The Dutch, in the language of that learned scholar and careful historian, Sir Adolphus Ward, " in the East Indies in particular were virtually strangling our commerce."[3] Ranke is even more emphatic : " Moncenigo," he says, " follows undoubtedly the universal opinion that England must either give up the trade with the East Indies or the peace with Holland." [4]

VII. The Prince of Orange complication seemed further from settlement than ever. By the eternal Edict of 1667, the office of Stadtholder was abolished in Holland, while later, 1669-70, by the final acceptance of the Concept of Harmony, no Stadtholder in any province could combine that office with the captain or admiral general-

[1] Mignet, *Négociations*, etc., III, 560 ; T. W. Fulton's *Sovereignty of the Sea*, p. 471.

[2] Pontalis, *De Witt*, II, 129 ; Mignet, III, 626.

[3] Article on Charles II in *D.N.B.* See also the cogent remarks of Mignet on this subject, *Négociations*, III, 617–18.

[4] Ranke, *History of England*, III, 492.

ship of the Union.[1] Thus by the most extraordinary irony of fate of which, perhaps, history has any record, William III, who was destined first to be the saviour of his country, and secondly to be the saviour of the liberties of Europe was placed in shackles by his own countrymen. Further, his own countrymen only eventually broke those shackles in order to save themselves from the pressure and the power of Charles II and Louis XIV.

VIII. Charles II, for his part, deliberately applied this pressure partly in order to free his nephew, the Prince of Orange, from these republican shackles. He endeavoured to safeguard the Prince's interests by a special clause in the Secret Treaty with Louis.

It is now necessary to hasten on to the events immediately preceding the Embassy of Sir George Downing and the outbreak of war. In the autumn of 1670 Sir William Temple was recalled from his post at the Hague, and was not permitted to return. This event alone was tantamount to a plain warning to the States General that they could no longer rely on England, and, in effect, De Witt knew what it meant.[2] In truth, though the precise terms of the Secret Treaty were not known to him, concurrent events and the reports of his ambassadors in London and Paris, specially De Groot in Paris, the son of the great Grotius, and himself a brilliant diplomatist, apprised him of the coming storm. Nearly a year elapsed, and the war which by a Second Treaty, dated at London December 21/31, 1670,[3] was to begin in the spring of 1672, had to be precipitated.

The salute of the English flag by Dutch vessels—the salute consisting in the striking of the flag and the lowering

[1] Edmundson, *History of Holland*, 246–9; Pontalis, *De Witt*, II, 84–7. The whole Orange complication and its reaction on Charles II is excellently dealt with by Sir John Seeley in the second volume of his *Growth of British Policy*. See also the remarks of Mignet, *Négociations*, etc., III, 629.

[2] See Sir William Temple's letter to his Father, November 22, 1670; Temple's *Works*, II, 170 (ed. 1770).

[3] Mignet, *Négociations*, etc., III, 256–65, Clause 6.

of the topsail—in British seas had for generations, certainly since the sixteenth century, been exacted by England, and acknowledged by the Dutch. It was formally acknowledged in Cromwell's Treaty of 1654, in the Treaty of Alliance of 1662, in the Treaty of Breda of 1667. But in all these Treaties the formula as to the detailed occasion of the salute had been left deliberately vague ; the salute was to be done in the same way in which it had been done immemorially. Though the vagueness of the formula was deliberate, on the English side it was held that England could claim the sovereignty of the British seas, could claim the salute as of right, not as a mere matter of respect or civility, and could claim it from whole fleets towards single English war vessels. The term British Seas itself had no precise and commonly accepted significance. Selden, the great English seventeenth-century authority on the subject, had in his *Mare Clausum* defined the British sea as " the Sea encompassing Great Britain." This sea consisted of four parts, the Western Sea (which included the Irish Sea), the Caledonian Sea, the German Sea, and the British Sea proper which included the Channel and extended as far as the northern coast of Spain. How far the British part of the Western and of the Caledonian or Northern Sea extended Selden was not very clear, as those seas stretched to America and to Iceland. At one time Cromwell in his Treaty negotiations with the Dutch in 1653, claimed the salute from single ships or fleets for any English warships anywhere on the ocean.[1] Since Cromwell's Treaty of 1654 the salute had been actually required in undefined " British seas " ; as to the occasion of execution the claim was expressed in the vague terms explained above. The Dutch, of course, denied the validity of the far-reaching English interpretation of the claims ; the salute of British warships (in the plural) by Dutch War or merchant vessels as a matter of civility in British seas

1 T. W. Fulton's *Sovereignty of the Sea* (1911), pp. 1–22, 116–17, 420–26, 476–88 ; Selden's *Mare Clausum*, p. 182 and subsequent pages, 1652 edition.

—by which they really meant the Channel—that was all the Treaties authorized they said.[1]

Accordingly the English Government determined deliberately to challenge the Dutch, first to diplomatic controversy, and then to war on this point. A Royal Yacht, the *Merlin*, was sent to fetch Lady Temple from the Hague in August, 1671. The Captain was ordered to pass through the Dutch Fleet and, if necessary, to exact attention by some cannon shots. It was too stormy for him to carry out his instructions on the outward voyage, but on the homeward voyage, with Lady Temple and her children on board, he deliberately ran into the Dutch Fleet six leagues from Dutch shores. He carried out his cannonading instructions. The Dutch Fleet were astonished at the amazing spectacle. The Vice-Admiral De Ghent dispatched a small boat to find out if the Royal Yacht were in distress. The Captain replied that he was not in distress, but on the contrary, was demanding the customary salute from the Dutch Fleet in accordance with instructions. The small boat returned to explain the situation to the Admiral, stating that the wife of the English Ambassador was on board. The Admiral knew Lady Temple well, and himself decided to find out the situation under the pretext of paying his respects to her. He therefore came aboard the Royal Yacht. He paid his respects to Lady Temple, and then asked the Captain what all the firing meant. The Captain explained. The Admiral said he was not aware what the precise position was in this business of the salute ; in any case the Captain's vessel was only a yacht, and not a man-of-war. Thereupon he politely took his leave. The Captain sought Lady Temple's advice. Lady Temple gave an answer worthy of an

[1] There is a very excellent historical survey (summarized hereafter) of the controversy from the Dutch standpoint in the answer of the Dutch Ambassador dated $\frac{28 \text{ Jan.}}{7 \text{ Feb.}}$ 1671/2 to Downing's two memorials of $\frac{2}{12}$ and $\frac{16}{20}$ Jan. *P.R.O. State Papers Foreign, Letters and Papers, Holland*, 188, ff. 39–43. See also Wicquefort, *Histoire des Provinces Unies*, IV, 239.

Ambassador's wife : he must carry out his orders as he thought best, without considering either her or her children. Accordingly the Captain decided to fire no more from his cockle-shell at the embattled fleet in the vain hope that they would strike their flags to him, but to make way for England, and land his ambassadorial burden safely. This he did. He was immediately put in the Tower for not having obeyed his orders, and for having compromised the honour of England.[1]

The war was arranged for the spring of 1672 so that there were some months for diplomatic controversy. In order that the controversy might be carried on with the maximum of diplomatic insolence combined with ability, Charles II determined to send Sir George Downing on a special mission to the Hague. He was to cover the whole field of grievances since Breda, the bitter complaints of British subjects in Surinam, commercial disputes and so on, but particularly he was to demand satisfaction for the Flag incident of August, 1671, and to embitter matters to the point of rupture.[2]

Sir William Temple reports that when some one suggested to the King that Downing's life might be endangered owing to the well-known Dutch sentiments towards him Charles replied with sardonic sang-froid, " Well, we will venture him." [3]

One word may here conveniently be said about the standpoint, and the relations of Sir William Temple and Sir George Downing. No two men could present a greater contrast in their attitude to Public Policy. Temple, during his Embassy at the Hague between 1667 and 1670,

[1] I base this account on Mignet, *Négociations*, etc., III, 651–3 ; Wicquefort, *Histoire des Provinces Unies*, IV, 237–44 ; Pontalis, *De Witt*, II, 134–6. Mignet quotes the graphic account given by Sir William Temple in a letter to his father dated September 14, 1671 : Temple, *Works*, II, 175–9 (ed. 1770).

[2] Mignet, *Négociations*, etc., III, 656.

[3] Temple, *Works*, II, 180 (ed. 1770), letter to his brother dated May 23, 1672.

took the line that as long as the political relations of England were peacefully aligned with those of the United Provinces and Sweden against the growing menace from France it did not matter much if we lost a little trade.

As the reader has already perceived in the course of this biography Downing's view, in effect, was that upon Trade depended not only the power but the security of England. Without trade, quite apart from a loss of material wealth, we should lack both ships and seamen, and without these England would simply cease to exist. Holding such opposite views as to what the relations of England and Holland both actually were, and should be, it is almost unnecessary to say that Temple and Downing disliked one another intensely. So utterly ignorant was Temple of all the intricacies of the commercial disputes between the two countries that he seems to have thought—or at least to have accepted De Witt's suggestion to this effect without comment—that the war of 1665–7 was mainly due to a dispute fomented by Downing over the two ships, *Bonaventura* and *Bona Esperanza*.[1] He also suggests—or accepts De Witt's suggestion—that Downing was corrupt, and was vexed at not receiving—as in Cromwell's day—bribes from the Dutch East India Company. The suggestion is on the face of it, absurd. Downing, as he himself says on one occasion, had been offered "three tun of gould or more" if he would accommodate matters,[2] and it is indeed obvious that the great Dutch companies would have been willing to pay almost any price if the interests of their trade rivals could have been deliberately sacrificed by the English Ambassador.[3]

On October 30, 1671, a Privy seal was issued authorizing my Lords of the Treasury to pay Sir George Downing

[1] Temple, *Works*, I, 307–8 (ed. 1770).

[2] Japikse, *De Verwikkelingen*, p. 410 footnote.

[3] Temple's views on Policy in relation to the Dutch will be found admirably expressed by him in his *Works*: see the two first volumes passim, specially his illuminating dispatch to Arlington of September 7, 1668, Vol. II, 2–13 (ed. 1770).

£1,500 for his equipage, and £10 a day for his ordinary as Ambassador to the States General.[1]

On December 14, 1671, Sir George Downing repaired to the Jewel House and received from the keeper " for his service in his House and Chappell " his Ambassadorial plate, both gilt and silver, weighing 8173 oz. It included " one greate Cesterne Armes graven " of 1185 oz. in silver, seventy-two " Trencher plates " armorially engraven weighing 1487 oz., six " guilt Gobletts," two guilt altar " Candlesticks chased," " guilt chased flaggons," and most curious of all, in one lot " Item One Warming pan Two Chamber pots Two stands for dishes armes graven 213 oz. weight." This is only a selection. The cistern seems to have been too heavy to take, as the Jewel House entry records that there was delivered to Sir George on 14th December, 1671, for his Embassy to Holland 7041 oz. white plate, and 1132 oz. gilt plate, " but ye white plate recd. backe by a sisterne 1185 oz, so yt there remaines in Sr George's hands in white plate 5855 oz. and in gilt plate 1132 oz." All this he was to deliver back in due course when his Embassy was over.[2]

In the last days of December, 1671, Sir George Downing reached the Hague. The Dutch knew quite well what they were to expect from their old acquaintance ; their witty Historian, Wicquefort, observed that " the King, his (Downing's) master, could not have sent to the States a Minister more disagreeable or more ready to pick a quarrel with them, following on an infinity of others which he had stirred up, both during the life and after the death of Oliver Cromwell, his first master." [3]

Henceforth I propose to present the mission of Sir George Downing in the form of a Journal based on certain manuscripts in the Public Record Office and in the British Museum. In the midst of dispatches from Kings, Secretaries of State and Ambassadors the reader will find some

[1] *Calendar of Treasury Books*, Vol. III, Pt. II, 1125.
[2] *B.M. Add. MSS.*, 22,920, f. 196.
[3] Wicquefort, *Histoire des Provinces Unies*, IV, 363.

extremely informing and very delightful letters from various young men who accompanied Sir George, or who went over while he was in Holland. These young men, fortunately, are more interested in the daily life and scenes of Holland in January–February, 1672, than in the complications of a Diplomatic Mission which was emphatically a farce because War had been arranged long before. Nevertheless, these young men, through their letters, give a far more vivid idea of the atmosphere of Holland at this crucial date than volumes of diplomatic dispatches : they saw the immense wealth of the Dutch ; they marvelled at their genius for order and for art ; they watched the swaying fortunes of the De Witt and Orange parties ; they met the greatest Admiral of his age, De Ruyter ; they observed the preparations for the inevitable conflict, and the stoical resolution with which a noble nation faced it.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

THE SAME CONTINUED

ONE word should be said as to the various correspondents who write the pleasant semi-official letters. John Ellis (1643 ?–1738) and James Vernon (1646 ?–1727) were afterwards notable persons, being Secretaries of State in the reign of William III—the Prince of Orange of these letters, who had just reached his twenty-first year. William Blathwayt (1649 ?–1717) had been Sir William Temple's Secretary at the Hague, and seems to have been acting in the same capacity to Sir George Downing. He, also, made his mark later, under William III, becoming Secretary at War. Thomas Williamson was cousin to Mr. Joseph Williamson, who was Secretary to Lord Arlington, and who was now just about to be promoted to the Secretaryship of the Council in Ordinary and knighted. All the writers of the letters—including Sir George Downing—address their letters to Joseph Williamson. Downing writes to Williamson because of his intimate association with Arlington who was virtually Foreign Secretary. The others because they seem to have been protégés of Williamson : they were probably as intelligent young men of means and family, temporarily, or perhaps even normally, employed in the office of the Secretary of State ; at any rate, Ellis and Vernon seem to have been sent to Holland by Williamson to be useful to the Ambassador in carrying dispatches or otherwise, to report what they thought of interest, to see the country, and generally to educate their minds.[1]

[1] For notices of Ellis, Vernon, Blathwayt and of Sir Joseph Williamson, see *D.N.B.*

Except for the letter of Charles II to Downing, and also of the letter of Lord Arlington to him, all the letters and dispatches which I now present in the form of a kind of Journal are from the original manuscripts in the Public Record Office.[1] In most cases I give the gist of the letter or dispatch, together with quotations, but in some cases the letter is given in full if it seemed to me particularly interesting. Moreover, where necessary, I explain an obscure point with the aid, often, of the invaluable Wicquefort.

January 1/11, 1671/2 : the Hague : *John Ellis to Mr. Joseph Williamson.*

He has safely arrived. My Lord Ambassador has just been entertained by the States " at a supper not extraordinary " : Ellis saw a little of it. He has delivered the letters to My Lord ; he has since spent some time—the Ambassador not requiring him—" in visiting that stately village " the Hague, and he proposes to visit some other remarkable places.[2]

The letters which Ellis delivered were the " Additional Instructions " from the Government dated December 24, 1671, from Whitehall which were dispatched express by Ellis on December 26. These instructions, after requiring Downing to demand peremptorily in writing definitive recognition of the King's dominion of " these seas " and exemplary punishment of Van Ghent, went on to instruct him, failing a reply within a fortnight, to give in another sharp and peremptory demand for an answer forthwith. If this is not given within a week he is to come away at once, without giving the States warning of the time of his departure.[3]

[1] *P.R.O. State Papers Foreign, Letters and Papers, Holland,* 188.
[2] *S.P.F. Holland,* 188, f. 1.
[3] *Calendar State Papers Dom.,* Dec., 1671–May, 1672, pp. 24 and 66.

January 2/12, 1671/2 : the Hague : *William Blathwayt to Williamson.*

My Lord Ambassador has been received in audience. "The States sent their Coach with two Deputies to conduct His Ex^cy to the Assembly, where he pronounced his speech . . . This morning he has delivered a Memoriall to the States concerning the Flagg which without doubt will not a little surprise them." The States General are considering the business of the Prince of Orange (—the question of his being made Captain General). "His Highness has been received in his progress with unspeakable joy and welcome acclamations of the People."[1]

January 2/12, 1671/2 : the Hague : *Sir George Downing to Williamson.*

"I have this day given in a memoriall to the States General to the Purport of the Instruction sent me by These pres[ent]s. What a noise it will make here y^u will easily conjecture." He has sent a copy of his Memorial in English and French to Lord Arlington with a letter.[2]

Wicquefort describes Downing's audience. He says he arrived with a suite of more than a hundred persons, acted the part rather of a Herald than an Ambassador, and spoke with a haughtiness that suggested that almost no concession would be adequate.

On the Flag incident, the main cause of complaint, he demanded, in the Memorial which he presented, the unqualified recognition of the sovereignty of the King of England, not only in those seas, but throughout the Ocean and that Admiral Van Ghent should be exemplarily punished.[3]

[1] *S.P.F. Holland*, 188, ff. 4–5.

[2] Id., f. 2. Unfortunately Downing's dispatches to Arlington seem to have gone astray: I failed to find them in the *P.R.O.*

[3] Wicquefort, *Histoire des Provinces Unies*, etc., IV, 363–4; see also Mignet, *Négociations*, etc., III, 695.

January 9/19, 1671/2 : the Hague : *John Ellis to Williamson.*

Ellis says he is carrying letters for my Lord Ambassador " to the packet apart from the comon male," as my Lord thinks it safer that way. Ellis finds it a trying task in this hard season, so little accustomed as he is to night voyages in the winter. However, he's glad to be of service to the Ambassador and to Williamson.[1]

January 11/12, 1671/2. *Memorial by Sir George Downing to the High and Mighty Lords the States General.*[2]

The Ambassador complains that, having sent his Steward to the Excise Officers for " Excise briefs," " for some wine and beere for the use of his family," his Steward was refused unless he paid, not the excise paid by the Nobles, but the excise paid " by the meanest of the subjects of this Province." Downing would not have complained if other Ministers were so treated, but he finds they are not. He thinks this conduct touches the honour and dignity of the King his Master very nearly ; a very bad precedent ; he asks for remedy.

Wicquefort throws light on this affair. He says the Dutch had recently determined only to give exemptions—presumably from Excise duties and so on—to the Ambassadors of those Princes who gave reciprocal treatment to the Dutch representatives at their Courts : England was not one of these. The Dutch therefore refused Downing's request. Wicquefort says this refusal " jetta Downing dans un emportement ridicule, qui luy fit dire : Que c'estoit là le moyen de contraindre le Roy, son Maistre, de se liguer avec la France contre cette République. Pour luy, qu'il aimoit mieux loger dans une hostellerie, ou bien s'en retourner, que de souffrir qu'on luy fist cet affront."[3]

[1] *S.P.F. Holland,* 188, f. 7. [2] Id., 188, ff. 8–9.
[3] Wicquefort, *Histoire des Provinces Unies,* IV, 363.

January 12/22, 1671/2 : the Hague : *Sir George Downing to Williamson.*

Downing will not inform him of occurrences here because Mr. Blaythwaite will tell them everything. Mr. Blaythwaite has been most useful.[1]

January 16/26, 1671/2 : the Hague : *Sir George Downing to Williamson.*

Downing says nothing is being done about the business of the Prince of Orange, everything at a standstill, even about the raising of men. "Yesterday I had a Conference wth the deputies of the States Gen^ll^ and this day I have given in a Second Memoriall about the businesse of the Flagg, and I suppose I shall have an answere some time this weeke ; had not the Conjuncture of affaires been as it is, I had had it undoubtedly Long ago, and y^u^ may easily guesse w^t^ a one, and did they yet know any way to Cleare themselves wth France I doe not finde the Inclinations of those that governe alterd from w^t^ they were formerly in regard of England."[2]

January 16/26, 1671/2 : Whitehall : *King Charles II to Sir George Downing.*

"Sr George Downing

I have seene all your letters to my Lord Arlington since your arrivall in Holland, and because I finde you some times divided in your opinion betwixt what seemes good to you for my affaires in the various emergencyes and appearances there and what my instructions direct you, that you may not erre in the future, I have thought fitt to send you my last minde upon the hinge of your whole negotiation, and in my owne hand, that you may likewise know it is your part to obey punctually my orders, instead of putting your selfe to the trouble of finding reasons why you do not do so, as I finde in your list of the

[1] *S.P.F. Holland*, 188, f. 12.

[2] Id., f. 75 ; this letter is undated but is clearly of the same date as the second Memorial.

12th currant. And first you must know I am entierly secure that France will joine with me against Holland, and not separate from me for any offers Holland can make to them. Next I do allow of your transmitting to me the States answer to your Memoriall concerning the flag, and that you stay there expecting my last resolution upon it, declaring that you cannot proceede to any new matter till you receive it; but upon the whole matter you must allwaies know my minde and resolution is, not only to insist upon the haveing my flag saluted even on there very shoare (as it was alwaies practised), but in haveing my dominion of these seas asserted, and Van Ghent exemplarily punished. Notwithstanding all this, I would have you use your skill so to amuse them, that they may not finally dispaire of me, and thereby give me time to make my selfe more ready and leave them more remisse in there preparations.

In the last place I must againe injoine you to spare no cost in informing your selfe exactly how ready there ships of warre are in all there ports, how soone they are like to put to sea, and to send what you learne of this kinde hether with all speede. I am

Your loveing frind

CHARLES R."[1]

This letter makes it clear that Downing was going too fast—even faster than the Instructions of December 24 warranted—in precipitating the rupture. Wicquefort[2]

[1] The original letter is in the Stowe MSS. (*B.M.*) 142, f. 84. It has been printed in *Facsimiles of Royal, etc. Autographs in the Department of Manuscripts, British Museum*, Series I–V. No., 46, 1899. A copy is in *Add. MSS.* 35,838, f. 262 (*Hardwicke Papers*, Vol. CCCCXC), where it is headed "Copy of a Letter from K. Chas. 2d. to Sir George Downing his Minister at the Hague from the original in the possession of the Marquis of Buckingham, which is all in the King's handwriting." A copy of this letter was also evidently in the possession of Lord Shaftesbury, whence it was copied by his Secretary, the Philosopher, John Locke, was discovered among the latter's papers, and was printed by Lord King in his *Life of Locke*, published in 1830 (Vol. I, 76–7).

[2] Wicquefort, *Histoire des Provinces Unies*, IV, 364–6.

says that Downing's Flag Memorial raised points of such importance that the States General had to refer to their constituents, the Provinces, which inevitably delayed the reply; that Downing, in accordance with his original instructions, had fixed an impossibly short time-limit for reply, and that when the States General finally sent him their answer on January 24/February 3, 1671/2, Downing said he could not receive it as he was no longer Ambassador, had been recalled, and was simply plain George Downing. Wicquefort—whose secret information of Foreign Affairs was simply amazing in its range and accuracy, so amazing that he seems to have had a sort of "wireless" apparatus in every embassy at the Hague, if not in every capital in Europe—had heard of this letter. He suggests that either it reached Downing too late—after he had taken his formal farewell, or that Downing determined to follow his original orders which he knew conformed to the wishes of the Duke of York, who was intensely eager to precipitate the conflict.

That Downing received the King's letter is clear from Lord Arlington's later letter of January 27. How he came to disregard instructions so categorical both from the King and Lord Arlington must remain a mystery. Suffice it to say that he suffered for his insubordination by a six-weeks' sojourn in the Tower on his return. The reader will note the King's consummate power of witty and cynical expression, and lest he be tempted to be excessively shocked by the cynicism I must ask him specially to refer to pages 234–6 of this book which summarize the causes of the King's attitude to the Dutch.

January 18/28, 1671/2 : Whitehall : *Lord Arlington to the Dutch Ambassador (Boreel) in London.*

The Dutch Ambassador—on behalf of the States General—had asked Charles II's mediation in the differences which had arisen between them and Louis XIV. These differences were partly commercial—a bitter tariff war, and

partly due to the fact that Louis could not forgive the Dutch for the Triple Alliance. For the latter reason the Dutch invoked Charles II's mediation. Arlington in this dispatch says that Charles declines to mediate : he has his own differences with the Dutch and his Ambassador at the Hague has made it plain that they must do satisfaction before he considers other matters. The Triple Alliance argument is shallow ; the Dutch themselves have admitted that the differences between Louis and themselves are commercial. As to the Triple Alliance, " His Ma^ty doth now againe assure the Ambassad^r that no temptation of advantage whatsoever shall make him depart from his engagement therein . . . knowing how much his Honour and interest oblige him to the preservation of the Peace between the two Crownes of France and Spain made at Aix la Chapelle." [1]

As has already been stated, the pivotal point of the Triple Alliance was the preservation of the Spanish Low Countries : Louis was not to be allowed to take Flanders. Charles insisted on this fundamental condition and, therefore, Arlington's words above are not in the least insincere.[2] But it may be objected, how could Charles permit the disintegration of the United Provinces by his Secret Treaties with Louis, and yet hope for the preservation of Flanders thereafter ? The answer is that if Louis, even though the United Provinces had been conquered, had attempted to take Flanders, he would at once have brought against him—as, indeed, later he did—a coalition of England, Spain, the Emperor, the Elector of Brandenburg, Sweden and the Prince of Orange. As to the latter, it must always be remembered that a main part of Charles's object in attacking the Dutch was to defeat the Republican Party under De Witt, and to restore his nephew the Prince of Orange to his ancestral dignities. By ignoring these facts

[1] *S.P.F. Holland*, 188, ff. 16–17.

[2] The condition that France must observe the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle was from the first insisted on by Charles in the negotiations preceding the Secret Treaties. See Mignet, *Négociations*, etc., III, 117–18, 125–16, 161.

Whig Historians have made nonsense of Charles's diplomacy.[1]

Charles, so far from intriguing against his own country, was pre-eminently a national King. While the Dutch were the supreme menace to England's commerce and power he fought against them in two wars.[2] When that menace began to pass after this, the third Dutch War, he faced towards France, and threw his diplomatic weight against Louis on vital occasions. He married his niece Mary to his nephew the Prince of Orange in 1677—he had first mooted the idea in 1674—and so rendered possible the Revolution of 1688. In the following year he allied himself with the Prince against Louis.

But, it will be objected, he continued to take money from Louis. True, he did—because Parliament declined to impose adequate taxation ; but, in effect, he spent most of the French gold on that Navy which in the end ensured the final defeat of Louis XIV.[3] As Pepys reiterated in the debates in the House of Commons, reported by the excellent Grey, Charles did more for the British Navy than any King of England had ever done before him.[4]

January 19/29, 1671/2 : Hague : *Sir George Downing to Williamson.*

" Sr

" The buisnesse of the Prince of Orange stands as it

[1] Though Bishop Burnet and Lord Macaulay, the chief of the Whig Historians, did, as it seems to me, simply run riot in dealing with Charles II—he was a sort of bee in their bonnet—I desire with all humility and sincerity to state my intense admiration for them generally as Historians.

[2] The third Dutch War is commonly represented as unpopular. Yet the plain fact is that when Parliament met in February, 1673, they speedily and unanimously voted the King a sum of £1,250,000 to assist him in its prosecution. It was at this time that Lord Shaftesbury made his celebrated speech, " delenda est Carthago."

[3] It is unnecessary to point out that, without Sea Power, the campaigns of William III and Marlborough would have been impossible.

[4] See, for instance, Pepys' brilliant and eloquent speech of February 21, 1676, as reported by Grey : *Debates*, IV, pp. 115–18.

did, his best friends even in Holland it selfe doe advise him not to accept the Office of General as it is now tenderd by them of Holland, and while that buisnesse is in suspence all other things are in suspence also. Nothing yet doing about theire Fleete. Wortz is gone up towards Gorcum and Utricht to see what possibility of defending that place or makeing a stop of the French fforces between Utricht and Naerden, yet I have noe answere to my Memoriall, there is one drawn up and it was this day read in the States Gen[ll] but they could not agree upon it, and have sent to Beverning for his assistance in the matter, so I am not like to have it till the beginning of next weeke. This buisnesse goes downe very hardly. What would become of it if it were in any other conjuncture of tyme? I have none from you since my last.

" S[r] your very affectionate humble servant,

" G. DOWNING." [1]

January 22/Feb. 1, 1671/2 : Hague : *J. Vernon to Williamson.*

" To-day I was at the Prince of Orange his house in the Bosch, half an hours walk out of Towne : that is but a small Ordinary house. The Orange house in the garden is good and there is a lively Statue of Cleopatra applying the Adder."

He and Ellis intend to see the Prince's other house at Ryswick to-morrow, and to visit Leyden by sled. " Those Gentlemen that came over with S[r] George are going to Cologne and intend to come home down the Rhin, and make a voyage of some 5 weekes. Cornett Watson hath despatched his buisness and talks of going to England Tuesday next. Most Honoured S[r]

" Yo[r] Wor[sps]

" Most Obedient and faithful servant,

" J. VERNON." [2]

[1] *S.P.F. Holland*, 188, f. 24. [1] Id., 188, ff. 27–8.

January 26/February 5, 1671/2 : Hague : *Sir George Downing to Williamson.*

(On January 23 Downing had written a brief note to say that nothing was happening : " very little doing about their fleet as yet " : in the following letter he writes more fully) :

" S^r^

" The time being on Tuesday last which was appointed by his Matie for my stay here in exspectation of an answere from this State about ye businesse of ye Flagg upon Wensday I gave in a memoriall notifying the same and that I had order presently to returne home, and I am accordingly preparing for my returne & hope to be going hence about ye middle of ye next weeke but the frost is more extreame than it has bin this whole winter so that I must send all my goods away in Waggons & I shall have extreame trouble in getting away. This my going away hath made a noise here like an unexpected thunder-clap & though noe answere could be gotten before yet thereupon they presently agreed upon something of an answere, & yesterday upon a 2nd answere & sent them both away by expresses to Boreel so that I doubt not but y^u^ have now some noise wth y^u^ from him. I have none from y^u^ since my last.

" I am S^r^ y^r^ very aff. humble serv^t^

" G. DOWNING." [1]

January 26/February 5, 1671/2 : Hague : *Tho. Williamson to Williamson.*

" About Tuesday or Wednesday next my Lord Amb^r^ has some intentions for England, which does not a little alarme the comon people here, & layes all the blame upon De Witt, who ere long will not be able to goe along in the Streets, they are all affraid that the English should joyne with the french against them, for I find if that England would not take part with the french, they would not valew all the power of france." He intends " to come away with my Lds servants." [2]

[1] *S.P.F. Holland,* 188, f. 32. [2] Id., f. 33.

January 26/February 5, 1671/2 : Hague : *J. Vernon to Williamson.*

He is still at the Hague trying to learn Dutch, and hopes to see other towns if " your Worship " will allow him to be abroad so long. Mr. Ellis and he have just been to see the Prince of Orange's house at Honslaardyke —about seven miles from the Hague. On the way they visited the village church of Loos-Duynen famous as the burial place of the Countess of Henneburge " with her 365 children which were all baptised in two Brasse Basins that they now show "—your worship has read of it in books. They then went to the Prince's house, " reckoned the best in Holland." Its like the Luxembourg in Paris only much smaller. The Rooms are little enough for a Prince's house. " There is a Mênage in the parke where are kept several Fowles most of them brought out of England," but many are dead " the country not agreeing with them." They came back by the sea-shore to Scheveling " from whence to the Hague there is a straight walke all sett with Trees & Admirably kept of about two English miles, it hath been made 7 or 8 years & is maintained by an imposition of a farthing upon every man & one peny upon every horse that passes by that way, out of which the States receive every year 8000 Guilders & the rest pays the Officer there & keeps it in repair. It is the most frequented passage hereabouts, for it is the great divertissements to go in Corso on the sands, and it is ordinary to come with six horses for those that have them." They have also visited another of the Prince of Orange's houses at Ryswick, a fine house, but the Prince thinks it too near the town.[1]

January 27/February 6, 1671/2 : Whitehall : *Lord Arlington to Sir George Downing.*

His Majesty is " not a little surprised to find you had mistaken his letter of the 16th . . . Now by y^r^ aforesaid Ans^we^ to his Ma^ty^ y^u^ have overthrown all this Instruction,

[1] *S.P.F. Holland*, 188, ff. 34–5.

and in effect, ye Dutch Ambassador attending an Audience of his Maty this day, told him from a Letter he had received of ye 24th, That yu had refused ye States Answe to yr Memoriall. So we conclude yu have taken yr Leave, and are come away : or at ye best, yu stay there incognito, which being the best Supposition we can make, His Maty comands me to desire you by this Expresse that yu procure by such a meanes as yu shall thinke most proper an Authentick Copy of ye States Answe to yr Memoriall, that yu transmitt the same to his Maty with all possible speed, and continue to stay there till yu have His Maty's last resolution againe. This is all I can say to you upon the Subject unlesse I should fill my letter wth complaints of yr continuing to misunderstand ye Orders that are sent you, how intelligible and plaine so ever they be ; But this is enough, and I am, my Lord, etc." [1]

January 28/February 7, 1671/2 : Westminster : the answer of the Dutch Ambassador Boreel to the two Memorials of Sir George Downing, of the 2/12, 16/26 of January 1671/2, upon "the Rencounter happened between the Merlin Yacht, N. Crow, Capt. and certain Men of Warre of the said Lords States."

This apparently is the answer of the States General which Downing ought to have received had he not on the 26th intimated that he had been recalled : it was, therefore, sent to the King, viâ Boreel, the Dutch Ambassador in London. The answer contains a brilliant survey—from the Dutch standpoint—of the historical aspect of the question of the Salute of the British Flag. How since Cromwell's peace of 1654 the matter has been regulated and repeated in Treaties of 1662 and 1667, i.e. Salute in the British Seas, not everywhere, and out of civility, not as Downing claimed, in all seas, and as acknowledgment of sovereignty, and not by whole fleets to single English

[1] *B.M. Add. MSS.*, 22,920, f. 203 : a copy of Lord Arlington's letter to Downing among the latter's official papers.

Men-of-War. Still, they'll concede the last point out of respect for Charles if he will perform Article 5 of the Triple Alliance if Louis XIV attacks them, so, however, as not to imperil the Freedom of the sea either now or hereafter.[1]

Article 5 of the Triple Alliance dealt with the guarantee of the Peace between France and Spain, and the preservation of the Low Countries. The Dutch seem to have expected Louis to attack them through Flanders, but he did not do so for the reasons already explained. He fell upon them from behind viâ the Rhine.

January 29/February 8, 1671/2 : Hague : *J. Vernon to Williamson.*

He is going to Amsterdam to-morrow, "having the opportunity of Cornet Watson's Company." It is thawing apace "and this day they have cut the ice with an Instrument drawn by horses all up to Maaslind Sluce and Delf."

The States are separated till the 5th of next month when they meet "to consider of the raysing of the 20,000 men they intend . . . Mony is not like to faill them for they are said to have great Treasures besides their mighty Taxes. Leyden alone is thought to have a Banck enough to maintaine a good warr, for they have not for many years opened it, but continually putt into it, and there is nothing that one eats or drinks that doth not pay several taxes ; that all land pays the half of its value yearly to the State ; the meer Excise of Wine in the Hague is farmed at 100 thousand Guildres this year. They are now making a Sellar in the Court where 7 millions are to be kept for some urgent Occasion."[2]

January 30/February 9, 1671/2 : Hague : *Tho. Williamson to Williamson.*

The States are still haggling over the conditions on which the Prince of Orange shall be made Captain General.

[1] *S.P.F. Holland,* 188, ff. 39–43. [2] Id., 188, f. 71.

If he is not promoted there will be "a great disturbance amongst the Comon people of whom he is greatly and intirely beloved, who sayes let but the Drumes goe for the Prince, and the Prince will have 3 for the States one so well he is beloved. To-morrow my Ld Amb^r^ intends if the yacht can get about to Schevelin to imbarque for England with whom Mr. Vernon and myselfe intende to come . . . My Ld Amb^r^ had his audience of Congé on Satturday last, a coppy of whose Speech you will have by this night's post."[1]

January 30/February 9, 1671/2 : Hague : *J. Vernon to Williamson.*

He is daily expecting to sail with My Lord (the Ambassador). He hears My Lord and his Secretary are to receive presents of 6000 and 600 Guildres respectively from the States. The States are busy about choosing Officers, among them Major Scott is made a Colonel—he is "in great credit with De Witt . . . the Prince of Orange not yet General though on Saturday last when Sr George had his Audience it was the generall report, now they cry it shall bee to-morrow, so it hath been to bee ever since I have been here."

There is a plethora of wool in the country, so that the trade in it is choked.[2]

February 2/12, 1671/2 : Hague : *J. Vernon to Williamson.*

"Most Honoured S^r^

I have just now the honor of Yo^r^ Wor^sps^ of the 16th Jan. by Mr. Thomas Williamson who arrived here last night but I saw him not till now for I am new alighted from Amsterdam whither I acquainted yor Wor^sp^ I was going in Company of Mr. Watson, Mr. Parker and Major Scot, who treated me with all Civility upon the sole account that I had the honor to be yor Wor^sps^ Servant. We went from hence Saturday in the afternoone and lay that night at Harlem about 20 English miles from hence. We past

[1] *S.P.F. Holland*, 188, ff. 69–70. [2] Id., f. 73.

through no considerable places, but went by within the sight of Leyden, and some houses of pleasure belonging to particular persons. Wee ferryd over a Branch of the Rhine which is dammd up before it runs into the Sea, those of Leyden would be glad to open it for it would make them a convenient port but it is the Interest of Amsterdam to oppose it. Wee came late to Harlem that wee saw but little of it unless it were the Fish market which is handsome and stands about the Church. The next day wee made hast for Amsterdam Where wee arrived in the morning it being but ten miles. Wee light at an English house where was Sr John Paul, Mr. Banks, Mr. Griffin of Hambrough and Sr George Downing's Son with his Compagnions who have been now a weeke abroad. Wee went first to see a rarity of a man that breake glasses with his breath, which he did severall Rhenish Wine glasses though held by an other, with the strength of his wind he would make them ring, tremble, and breake, what was particular, sounding to one glasse he said he found it was unequally made, and then crying to it onely one piece of it flew out, whereas those that were more equall flew into Shivers. The man himself is a lean ordinary man, he was a rich marchant and cracked but now he sells wine and breaks glasses and that, they say, hath made him whole againe. He is otherwise ingenious and whereas in Taverns here there are bells hung to call the people, here the pulling of the roap makes a noise imitating the cry of some Fowle. Thence we went to see a Table of marble inlayd with Mother of pearle representing several flowers and inset in the natural Colors which changed to admiration being looked upon in several places : the fellow of it was sent as a present to the King of Japan and cost 6000L sterlin and the Workman hath been 30 years about them without intermission. Next we saw the great terrestrial globe all of Copper of 6 foot Diameter which is not to be sold under 1500 pounds sterlin. We past by Iveps house the great Merchant here, which cost him 12000 pounds before he brought it above ground. The next day we

were to see the Admiralty where one enters with an Order. Wee were carried through all the Chambers of the Stores which have their particular places assigned them, the sailes here, the ropes there, Balls in another place, every thing in its Order that it needs but open a Doore in every Chamber to throw every Ships tackle into it, and in case of fire they can turne locks which will lett them in 1600 Tun of Water which is always reserved on the top of the house for that use. The East India Store house is near this but wee had not time to see both. We tooke a Boat, and rowd round their men of warr which ly there to the number of 50 but most small ones ; there was allso of their great ones the Lyon, the Elephant, the Looking glass, etc. The Swiftsure lay here single, her back is not Broken, but is as fitt to saile as any of the rest. The Lanterne of the Royall Charles is kept in the Admiralty house. Thence we went to see Admirall de Ruyter who lives there upon the Quay in a pretty house. He received us courteously and made us tast a glasse of Navarre Wine, a present lately made him by the Count de Guiche. He spoke all English and not ill. He told us he was one of the oldest living that had been in the West Indies, where he was when a Boy with the first that went thither, and he is now 63 years old, yet he looks very fresh coloured and lusty, under his years he looks, and is drest perfect Citizen like in a plaine Velvet Coat. Wee stayd but little with him for it was the morning : he had invited us for the afternoone but wee were to be gone : going from thence wee saw Collonell Spellman he that conquered the Kingdom of Macassar, he is about 50 years old a tall lusty man with a good bold looke. I saw some hospitals which are in all to the number of 50 for men, women and children : that the Charity of Amsterdam is reckoned by some to equall the Charity of the greatest part of France, for besides these publique houses which are well endowed, it is ordinary for great marchants upon the safe arrivall of their vessells to give two, or 300 pounds to the poors purse. I saw the Exchange, their Bedlam, Spinhouse, Rasphouse and Stadt-

house which is to noble to bee attempted to bee described. My time was but short for these Gentlemens occasions called them to the Hague so we left Amsterdam that Monday and came to Harlem the same night. The next morning wee had just time to see the Stadthouse where are all the Earls of Holland painted and the Earle of Hollands house, an old building where is some rare pieces of painting ; above all one foot of a man which the prince of Toscany offered 1500 pistols to cutt out from the piece ; in the garden is the picture of him that they pretend to have invented printing first one Maurice Castoreus, a gentleman of Haarlem in the year 1440. I saluted Mon^r Casteline the Gazeteer here from yor Wor^sp who is full of all estime and respect for yor wor^sp. Wee left Haarlem that morning, wee past by those fields that are so famous for whitening of linnen whether Flanders send all theirs that all the summer time there be many thousand Acres all covered, and here is a great wood which is the nearest they have to Amsterdam for the Citizens to come to divert themselves. Wee passed over the 3 great Sluices that divide the salt and sweet sea and came to the Hague on tuesday night. I shall in Obedience to yor Wor^sps Commands sett forward for London on Saturday next. I hope to see Leyden and Roterdam in the way.

I am,
Most Honoured S^r
Yo^r Wor^sps
Most Obedient and faithful Servant
J. VERNON."[1]

February 2/12, 1671/2 : Hague : *Sir George Downing to Sir Joseph Williamson.*

" S^r

" The principall errand of these lines is to congratulate yor new hono^r and office (see p. 243) when those two come together its completely well. The States of Holland have pitch'd upon theire Officers for their Quota

[1] *S.P.F. Holland*, 188, ff. 76–8.

of the twenty Thousand men now to be levied. And have also pitch't upon a great number of Officers for another twenty thousand men. The buisness of the Prince of Orange is not done yet, but no further doubt but that it will be accomoded by an expedient of the Townes of Holland giving him an Act to assure him that when he comes to be two and twenty yeares old he shall be made Gen^ll^ and Admirall without any limitation of tyme. They are making ready theire men of War in all parts.

"I am S^r^ yor very affectionate humble Ser^t^

"G. DOWNING."[1]

February 2/12, 1671/2 : Hague : *J. Vernon to Sir Joseph Williamson.*

"Sr George is still kept here, for the yacht came not about, being hindered by the great frosts and Ice, he knows not now whether he shall go by land or hire some other Vessell. I am seeking some opportunity of returning as soon as possible.

The States have been very busy for the naming of all the chiefe Officers of their New Leavyes wch are to consist of 12 Regiments, 5 of foot and 7 of horse ; the foot Regiments are to be raised within a month and within this fortnight they will set about raising 15,000 more.

They begin to beleeve now upon their last Advice from England that they are not to expect any great assistance from thence, now they will endeavor afresh to draw of[f] the Suede for he being joined to them they imagine themselves strong enough against the United forces of the world. They intend to draw a line from Utrecht to Naerden for the securing of Holland, which will be above 4 leagues long and that is to be made good by Burgers, whose Number will amount to 60,000 men.

Then they resolve to venture all their liberty. I was by when Vanderdouse, a Nobleman of the Country said We will give halfe of what We are worthe : I have two

[1] *S.P.F. Holland*, 188, f. 79.

hundred thousand pounds in the Bank, I will take out one, and give it to the States.

They talke of setting out 200 Ships great and small besides fire Ships. They expect 26,000 men from Brandenburg who hath sent them word all things are in a readines as they desire."[1]

February 2/12, 1671/2 : Hague : *Christopher Parker to Sir Joseph Williamson.*

He hopes, together with Sir Joseph's good cousin shortly to " have ye honour to Kiss yr hands at Whitehall. My Lord hath sent all his goods the beginning of this weeke to Vlardingen aship board and waites ye coming of ye mumouth yacht to Sheeveling to imbarque. The newse here is that France and England are Certainly agreed, at which they generallie Seem to be very much Troubled. I wish for Peace and an opportunity to assure y^{u} that I am

S^{r} y^{r} most humb. Servant,

CHRISTOPHER PARKER."[2]

February 3/13, 1671/2: Whitehall: *Lord Arlington's answer to the Dutch Ambassador's Memorial.*

His Majesty, remembering all he and his Predecessors have done in protecting the United Provinces, was much surprised at their tardiness in offering reparation in the matter of the Flag. He sent his Ambassador to admonish them, who did so, and in order to hasten their reply, offered to leave the place, whereupon their Ambassador on January 28 presented a Memorial of considerable obscurity, referring particularly to the Treaty of 1654 made with the Usurper Cromwell. But his Majesty bases his claim not on Treaties but " from a prescription of many ages, and ye practise of all times." In any case the answer is full of ambiguities, and conditional on His Majesty's helping them against the Most Christian King (Louis XIV), in a quarrel which they have admitted before is commercial, and not arising out of the Triple Alliance. As to the

[1] *S.P.F. Holland*, 188, f. 81. [2] Id., f. 83.

Triple Alliance his Majesty will inviolably maintain it "and yet not sacrifice his owne honour, suffer injuries to be done to ye Trade and Navigation of his Subjects, or stand by ye States when they impose upon their neighbours, and would bee Warranted therein by ye Triple League."

His Majesty's claims to the sovereignty of the sea are unquestionable: it is not a mere matter of respect and civility. Finally, though His Majesty's Ambassador at the Hague demanded the exemplary punishment of Van Ghent they have done nothing. Will they answer this question directly—did Van Ghent proceed as he did under orders (as His Majesty suspects) or not, and will an answer be made on the other points of his Ambassador's memoriall.[1]

On February 6, 1671/2, Sir George Downing reached London and the next day he was examined privately by some of the Lords of the Council. An account of this examination was presented to the King. The King ordered Sir George to be sent prisoner to the Tower for not having obeyed his orders.[2] Meanwhile the Dutch revenged themselves upon Sir George in a series of cartoons. One depicted him preaching in a tub, and over it the words, "*This I was*"; the second represented a treacherous courtier saying, "*This I am*"; the third portrayed him hanging on a gibbet with the words, "*This I shall be.*"[3]

It remains to state that on March 13, 1672, Sir Robert Holmes unsuccessfully attacked the Dutch Smyrna Fleet in the Channel. The attack was unscrupulous as War had not yet been declared: it was as unscrupulous, in these circumstances, as the previous exploit of Holmes in the spring of 1664 on the coast of Guinea, and as De Ruyter's devastating retaliation in the autumn of that year. At the same time it should be explained that the immediate cause of the attack was the refusal of the Dutch to salute. Holmes

[1] *S.P.F. Holland*, 188, ff. 84–5.

[2] *Calendar State Papers Dom.*, Dec., 1671–May, 1672, p. 123.

[3] *The History of the Colony of Massachusett's Bay*, 1628–1629, by Governor Hutchinson, Vol. I, p. 111 footnote; published 1765. Despite an effort I have failed to trace these cartoons, though I still hope they may be in existence.

only had five ships to begin with and three more later on : the Dutch had eleven men-of-war, and of fifty-six merchantmen, some twenty were armed. In these circumstances Holmes's attack was at any rate not lacking in gallantry.[1] Four days after the attack on the Smyrna Fleet, Charles II formally declared war on the United Provinces on the ground that they had failed to give him satisfaction in the matter of the Flag, in matters commercial, and in matters pertaining to his personal honour—the unfortunate medals and pictures.

On the very same day, March 17/27, 1671/2, that War was declared the Dutch Ambassadors in London—for Meerman had now joined Boreel—replied to Lord Arlington's Memorial of February 3. While the States General would agree that whole fleets should salute a single English warship in British seas, they manfully desired not to be pushed further than the Treaty of Breda went on the subject of Sovereignty. Nor could they agree to punish Van Ghent for failing to interpret an obscure point in a Treaty, in accordance with the English idea of it which he could not be expected to know. No order had been given him not to strike to any of His Majesty's Warships, nor had he failed to do so out of any lack of respect.[2]

Thus to the end the Dutch, though two powerful foes were on the point of falling upon them by land and sea, stubbornly and gallantly declined to bow to demands which they conceived to be unjust. In the agony of the ensuing conflict which lasted for two years with England, and for six years with France, three of the greatest men of the age, or of any age, perished : De Witt was torn to pieces by a maniacal mob who imputed to him the disasters of the first six months ; Admiral de Ruyter died fighting the French Fleet in the Mediterranean ; Marshal Turenne, Louis' greatest general, fell in battle. Thousands of unknown soldiers and sailors lost their lives in a war which

[1] See the account of the fight in T. W. Fulton's *Sovereignty of the Sea*, pp. 485–6 ; also *D.N.B.*, under Holmes.

[2] *S.P.F. Holland*, 188, ff. 131–2.

for them had little significance except suffering—the main significance, for the vast majority of men, of all the wars that have ever been.

" I wish for Peace " : the words of youthful Christopher Parker written in his own hand two and a half centuries ago, pathetic as they appear in their faded ink and time-worn paper, express also to-day, with an added poignancy, the only hope for the future of humanity.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

THE REMAINING YEARS (1672-84): PARLIAMENT MAN, COMMISSIONER OF CUSTOMS, COUNTRY GENTLEMAN: SOME FAMILY LETTERS: THE END

> On Man, on Nature, and on Human Life,
> Musing in solitude, I oft perceive
> Fair trains of imagery before me rise,
> Accompanied by feelings of delight
> Pure, or with no unpleasing sadness mixed;
> And I am conscious of affecting thoughts
> And dear remembrances, whose presence soothes
> Or elevates the Mind, intent to weigh
> The good and evil of our mortal state.
>
> —WORDSWORTH: *The Recluse.*

> But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,
> Shall wholly do away, I ween,
> The marks of that which once hath been.
>
> —COLERIDGE: *Christabel*, ls. 424–6.

THE remaining years of Sir George Downing's life present a difficulty to the biographer. Though it is possible to give the reader a general idea of Sir George Downing's doings in the House of Commons, in the governing and administrative world of Whitehall, and in the more pleasing surroundings of the country, in these the last twelve years of his life, it is not possible to give a detailed account. What, for instance, was the sometime Scoutmaster-General of Cromwell thinking and doing in the fevered and terrible period of the Popish Plot, during those several years which began in September, 1678, when England for the only time in its history became

possessed of a devil, and was overwhelmed in " the ocean of darkness and death " ?

During that time one of the few undeceived and therefore sane men in England was Charles II, and it is impossible not to suppose that another of that selectly sane company was Sir George Downing. For the King, from his experience as head of the Government, and Downing, from his experiences both as Diplomatist and Parliament man, knew perfectly well that such politicians as Algernon Sydney and Lord Shaftesbury, acting—for motives tortuous in their virtue and their viciousness—in close liaison with Louis XIV and Barillon, were unquestionably capable of anything.

That Charles II used Downing as a sort of Whip in the House of Commons has been alleged in a pamphlet attributed to Marvell,[1] and it is not unlikely that Downing endeavoured, on the King's behalf, to counter with gold, the gold which clinked in the pockets of those members who were in the pay of the French Ambassador ; after all, Downing knew how to do it, for he had done it in Holland, at least in individual cases.[2]

But whether Downing actually was employed for secret service of this kind by Charles II is not definitely known, and it is profitless to speculate. After all, the point of secret service is that it shall be secret, secret both from the curious eyes of contemporaries and from the prying

[1] *A Seasonable Argument to persuade all the Grand Juries in England to Petition for a New Parliament*, p. 14 (pubd. 1677), referred to by Sir Charles Firth in his notice of Downing in the *D.N.B.*

[2] The reader will remember the secret information Downing obtained from " my friend " in 1665. That the States General, or some of their members, were far from bribe-proof is suggested by Secretary Thurloe in a letter to Downing dated from Whitehall, October 29, 1658. The letter is in cypher and is to be found in *B.M. Add. MSS.*, 22,919, ff. 57–8 : the part of the letter relevant to this matter runs as follows :

" I desire you to try whether you cannot make any of the St. Gen. or those of Holland not only to correspond with you but to promote our affaires as there shall bee opportunity. Its sayd that they are no wise nice in those things where they can have a good reward."

eyes of posterity. That is why a definitive work on the Back-Stairs can never really be written : either its archives are in ashes, or in disjected fragments. Moreover, much, if not most, was accomplished in whispered talks and walks in the galleries of Whitehall, in the gardens of Versailles, sometimes even in places less august ; the cellar, for instance, of Mr. Sheppard, a City wine merchant, where Lord William Russell, Lord Essex, and others met in the autumn of 1682, not solely or even mainly, so Sir Adolphus Ward suggests, for the purpose of tasting Mr. Sheppard's sherry.[1]

Sir George Downing's imprisonment in the Tower, where we left him in the last chapter, continued for six weeks. Then, on March 19, 1672, he was released.[2] Sir George Downing was never again employed by Charles II on any Diplomatic Mission, nor was he entrusted with any eminent political post. On the other hand, he occupied an administrative position of very considerable importance, for, when he gave up the Secretaryship of the Treasury in September, 1671, he had been appointed one of His Majesty's Commissioners of Customs at a salary of £2,000 a year.[3] This post he continued to hold to the end of his life.[4]

In deciding not to employ Downing in any ministerial position—for instance, a Secretaryship of State, for which he was eminently fitted in point of ability—Charles II showed

[1] This excellent remark by the late Master of Peterhouse will be found in his dispassionate account of Lord William Russell in the *D.N.B.* From Mr. Sheppard's cellar emanated in some measure, if not the assassination project of the Rye House, the project for an armed insurrection which would have involved England in anarchy and blood, and removed from Louis XIV his constant dread of English intervention in Europe.

[2] *Calendar of State Papers Dom.*, Dec., 1671 to May, 1672, p. 218. Warrant to Sir John Robinson for Sir George Downing's discharge from the Tower.

[3] *Calendar of Treasury Books*, Vol. III, Pt. II, p. 935 : the Warrant of appointment is dated September 24, 1671.

[4] Narcissus Luttrell was mistaken in thinking that Downing was removed from this post early in 1683. Luttrell's *Brief Relation*, I, 251 ; entry under February 28, 1682/3.

his customary shrewdness. As an adviser in economic, commercial and financial matters, as an administrator in the most important department of revenue, and as an expounder of policy connected with these and other matters in the House of Commons, Downing, as we shall see, was at his best. Had he been employed as a Minister of State, he would, without question, either rightly have been disgraced by the House of Commons for sheer insolence, or wrongly impeached by them for sheer efficiency. For the Parliaments of Charles II's reign, whatever may be said for them in the sphere of constitutional development, and in this respect it is hardly possible to say too much in their praise, displayed otherwise an incompetence literally devastating. All Charles II's most eminent, honest, brilliant and efficient servants they ruined or tried to ruin. They destroyed Lord Clarendon, they hounded Lord Danby from office, they tried to ruin Lord Halifax, they sent Sir Joseph Williamson to the Tower, they struck a deadly blow at the British Navy by depriving it at a critical period of the services of Samuel Pepys. On the other hand, Lord Arlington, who was certainly the most sinister and, with the exception of Lauderdale, the least attractive of all Charles II's Ministers, they let off, deceived by his astuteness. Shaftesbury, whose wickedness was too much even for Bishop Burnet, they idolized.

And now let us consider very briefly what part was played by Sir George Downing in these Parliaments. He spoke with fair frequency, and always went straight to the root of the matter. Reading the Debates between 1667 and 1685, as recorded in the notes of the excellent Anchitell Grey, it is impossible not to be impressed by Downing's speeches ; they are conspicuous for their downright sense and originality amid torrents of nonsense, which flowed all too freely from some other members ; even so, time has tempered the nonsense and made it now merely amusing.

Downing was a consistent supporter of an adequate Navy, " the best an Englishman can do," he said in a

Debate on October 27, 1670.[1] Again, on February 21, 1676/7, he strongly supported a vote of supply amounting to £600,000 to be allocated to the building of 30 ships. "This great fleet of France can intend no other neighbour than we. Now for him to build ships in the great occasion he has for land armies, this must be against us." He used an irrefutable argument against the factious Opposition, who made a point, at one and the same time, of urging the King to go to war with France, and of finding reasons to withhold supply. One of these reasons was, that if the Commons granted supply the King would have no further need of them, and would dissolve them. Downing said, "whatever is bestowed on building ships makes a Parliament still more necessary. For the King must have supply to support them, and so there is no danger of our not meeting."[2] Again, a year later, February 18, 1677/8, he is strongly in favour of granting the King an adequate supply for both Navy and Army so as to support our new Allies, among them the Dutch; so completely had the diplomatic kaleidoscope changed owing to the growing menace from France.

It was during this Debate that Pepys slightly lost his temper with Colonel Birch, an exceedingly persistent, verbose and not seldom boring speaker, though, on occasion, he made remarks altogether excellent. Colonel Birch, who had started life as a carter, and had subsequently become a Colonel in the Parliamentary Army, had been finding all sorts of reasons for only voting £500,000. In particular he quoted the precedent of the expenditure of 1653 in the course of the first Dutch War, twenty-five years ago; for the passage of time and the normal automatic increase in expenditure made no difference whatever to Colonel Birch. Pepys was satirical. First of all, he pointed out that the actual expenditure in 1653 was far beyond anything Colonel Birch had calculated it to be, even in those days. Then—"Birch makes all his calculations from 1653, his year, and his War, and his time."

[1] Grey, *Commons Debates*, Vol. I, 271. [2] Id. Vol. IV, 125.

Colonel Birch was much offended : he revenged himself on Pepys and the House by speaking no less than four further times in the course of the Debate.

Finally, the House of Commons surpassed itself in militant generosity, and resolved, " That the sum of one Million be raised, for enabling his Majesty to enter into an actual War against the French King." [1]

In fairness to Colonel Birch, one wholly excellent remark of his must be quoted. It was January 27, 1673/4, and the House was considering the question of making peace with the Dutch, a proposition which Sir George Downing strongly supported. The Speaker, Macaulay's Sir Edward Seymour, having left the Chair, had spoken in favour of peace ; in the course of his remarks, however, he had found consolation in the reflection that, at any rate, not only had the War caused exhaustion to France, but, as compared with ourselves, the Dutch had suffered more heavily. Colonel Birch rose to his legs. After some preliminary remarks, he observed : " He (Seymour) tells you, ' though it cost you much, yet it cost the Dutch more.' Two neighbours went to Law, and undid one another ; and, sitting by the fireside, one was comforting himself thus, ' but it cost my neighbour more than me.' " [2]

Thus in homely language did Colonel Birch, two and a half centuries ago, illustrate the essential absurdity of War.

Downing was a consistent advocate of the introduction into England of the Dutch taxation policy of raising money by Excise rather than by Customs, a policy of the future which had to wait till it could be introduced by a Prime Minister of the calibre of Walpole, be further expounded by an economist of the genius of Adam Smith, and drastically put into practice by a younger Pitt.[3]

High export and import duties were a hindrance to

[1] Grey, *Commons Debates*, Vol. V, 164–79. [2] Id., Vol. II, 350–54.

[3] See for a summary of Walpole's and Pitt's accomplishment, Cunningham's *Growth of English Industry and Commerce*, Vol. II, pp. 424–31, and 604 footnote.

Trade, whereas Excise not only did not discourage Trade but brought in a far larger revenue. As early as January, 1658/9, Downing was reiterating the advantages of an Excise as against a Customs policy in his letters to Secretary Thurloe. Customs, he said then, were an "unpassible barrier against trade."[1] Later on, in the course of a Debate on November 4, 1670, in the House of Commons he said, "Bring down the Customs, and lay the whole load upon what is spent, or your land will never thrive." A few days later he was pointing out in debate how a higher Customs duty than 2*d.* a pound on tobacco would simply discourage the Colonial trade and encourage smuggling. Seamen, he said, can conceal 20 lb. of tobacco in their "slops, the reason why they wear them." For this smuggling reason alone, he argued, more revenue would, in fact, accrue from a 2*d.* duty than from a 3*d.* duty.[2]

Downing was, indeed, one of the earliest apostles of Free Trade. The fact that he was also an ardent believer[3] in the policy of the Navigation Acts does not invalidate this statement. For the Navigation Acts were Acts of imperial policy introduced and enforced both by Cromwell and Charles II in order to preserve the Colonies, to build up the Mercantile Marine, to encourage seamen and, therefore, the Navy, and to wrest from the Dutch the carrying trade of the world.

Seventeenth-century statesmen realized that without ships and seamen, that is without sea power, England was undone.[4] In fact, the English Mercantile Marine doubled itself between the Restoration and the Revolution. The

[1] *Clarke Papers*, edited by Sir Charles Firth, Vol. III, pp. 174–9.

[2] Grey, *Commons Debates*, Vol. I, 277, 285–6, 311.

[3] See in the *Calendar of State Papers Colonial* various recommendations of Downing (either separately or with others) to the King, to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, etc., as to the enforcement of the Navigation Acts in New England and the West Indies, e.g. Vol. for 1661–8, p. 629; for 1675–6, pp. 231, 381, 482; for 1681–5, p. 529.

[4] For a brilliant and eminently just account of the Mercantile Theory summing up recent research, see *The Founding of New England*, by James Truslow Adams, ch. xii, "The Theory of Empire" (Boston, 1921).

great merchant-economist Sir Josiah Child stated in 1694 that he could well remember when the wharves and quays of London, not only were a third less in number than they were then, 1694, but were only half employed. In 1694, though increased by a third, they could not cope with the mass of goods.[1]

That Downing appreciated the preliminary fundamentals of the Free Trade position is clear, not only from his attitude on the Customs question, but from his attitude on other questions. Thus he always supported any Bill in the House of Commons permitting the free settlement in England of foreigners. "Invite Foreigners in," he said in a Debate on a Naturalization Bill on December 31, 1680, "and do that with them that is sober and moderate, and you will have effect, if you give them liberty to work out of Corporations."[2]

Again, he and his brother Commissioners of Customs, advising the Lords of Trade and Plantations on December 12, 1681, with regard to an Act of the Colony of Virginia for regulating quays where goods should come, pointed out that "Trade is to be courted not forced." This particular Act is bad, say the Commissioners, for it ignores this fundamental principle. Merchants will come to a certain place and not to another; where they freely come and where Trade carries itself, there, and only there, can you have your quay for Customs purposes.[3]

Almost his last official act was to sign a report on April 8, 1684, advising the Lords of Trade and Plantations to revoke an Act passed in Jamaica against engrossing and forestalling, in short, an Act against getting first to market. He and his fellow Commissioners of Customs have consulted merchants and others, and learn that both the King and the Island will suffer by the Act because it will spoil free and open markets. "The Act is already in force, and

[1] Cunningham, *Growth of English Industry and Commerce*, Vol. II, p. 213, footnote.

[2] Grey, *Commons Debates*, Vol. VIII, 225–6.

[3] *Calendar of State Papers Colonial*, 1681–5, p. 152.

on the whole we recommend that it be speedily revoked." Accordingly my Lords of Trade and Plantations decided that the Act should be repealed.[1]

Finally, in taking leave of Sir George Downing as Parliament man, Commissioner of Customs, and Free Trader, listen briefly to this Debate in the House of Commons on March 1, 1676/7. Our old friend Colonel Birch—no one but Colonel Birch could have fathered so foolish a measure—had introduced a Bill to encourage, by penalties and compulsion, the universal planting and sowing of hemp and flax in England. The country, he said, was impoverished : all the wealth and labour flowed to London. The farmer had to thresh wheat himself because he could not get labour. This compulsory planting of half an acre in every hundred acres with hemp and flax proposed in the Bill will solve the entire social and economic problem. The Elizabethan Poor Law may then safely be abolished. All the poor will be at work planting hemp and flax. No more need for French Linen, on the importation of which you spend £150,000 a year. He leaves it to the House.

Up rose Mr. Swynfin. He thought it great presumption in the Colonel " to teach all gentlemen and farmers in England how to husband their land." If hemp and flax are profitable to grow, it will be grown, otherwise not. Possibly the Bill may breed a few Surveyors, and cause a certain amount of perjury. It will accomplish nothing else. A ridiculous Bill, let us get to greater affairs.

But the crowning denunciation came from Sir George Downing. He began suavely. Certainly French Linen is imported at a cost of £500,000 a year or more. (Colonel Birch's figures were usually out about four times either way—too much or too little.) For his part he is for the Bill, but utterly against the compulsory part, which, of course, was the main, if not the whole point of it. This proposal amounts to taxation " under a continued pretense." He, personally, knew a hundred parishes where not a

[1] *Calendar of State Papers Colonial*, 1681–5, p. 614.

single acre was fit for hemp or flax growing. For his part he would move for the compulsory planting of "Olives, oranges, or pomegranates, as practicable as this." Why not plant Canary Grapes? Finally, Sir George Downing became serious: "If you will encourage linnen manufactures, make it every man's interest to plant it; else you'll have your lands taxed, and nothing else will come of it. The flax-dressers were invited hither from abroad, and then starts up a little Statute of freedom [i.e. a statute, presumably, to confine the industry to the Freemen of Corporations], and they rot in jail. Though you could have flax for nothing, this will not turn to account, the French linnen coming in at one third part value that we can make it at." [1]

Nevertheless, the House of Commons ordered the Bill to be committed!

Before journeying down to East Hatley and Gamlingay to catch a glimpse of George Downing as a family man and country gentleman, it is necessary to mention two matters of great historic importance with which he was closely associated. The first concerns the peace with the Dutch,

[1] Grey, *Commons Debates*, Vol. IV, 160–4. In the above account of Downing as Parliament man I have only dealt with what seemed to me his most important and interesting speeches. But if the reader desires to probe further he will find Downing (I give volumes and pages as Grey contains no name index) advocating his policy of a National Bank (Vol. I, 351, January 16, 1670/1); supporting the Declaration of Indulgence (Vol. II, 18–19, February 10, 1672/3); supporting a Naturalization Bill (Vol. II, 154–5, March 24, 1672/3); defending Lord Arlington (Vol. II, 313–14, Jan. 19, 1673/4); defending Lord Treasurer Danby (Vol. III, 54–5 and 86–7, April 27, and May 3, 1675); defending the Exchequer system and advocating Appropriation of Supply (Vol. III, 360, October 26, 1675); opposing "tacking" (Vol. III, 450–1, November 11, 1675); supporting the Act for continuing for three years the additional excise granted in 1670 (Vol. IV, 237, March 12, 1676/7); pointing out how jealousy of French councils has been removed since the marriage of the Prince of Orange "to the heir to the Crown" (Vol. V, 66, Feb. 4, 1677/8); supporting a Bill for setting up a Register of Lands, to simplify sales (Vol. V, 147, Feb. 11, 1677/8); defending the Duke of York during the Popish Plot period (Vol. VI, 146, 244–5, November 4 and 21, 1678). This summary of Downing's speeches, though not exhaustive, is fairly complete.

after the third and last Dutch War, which was ended on February 9/19, 1673/4, by the Treaty of Westminster. The second concerns the settlement of the Bankers Debt following the stop of the Exchequer of January, 1672.

The peace which ended the third and last Dutch War on the whole favoured England, because, although the Dutch had had rather the better of the sea-battles, they were also fighting Louis XIV and were prepared to pay a price for peace with England. Thus they conceded, to a far greater extent than they had ever done before, the English claim to the salute at sea. From Cape Finisterre in Spain to Van Staten land in Norway they would strike with single ships and whole fleets to any ship or ships carrying " His Majesty of Great Britain's flag or jack." They would also pay an indemnity. Otherwise both sides would make mutual restitution of any captured places. Surinam would remain with the Dutch, but the grievances of British subjects there which had been so considerable a cause of the last conflict were to be systematically remedied. Commercial questions were to be dealt with by Commissioners who should draw up a special Treaty.[1]

Accordingly on June 21, 1674, the King signed a warrant appointing as the English Commissioners for the Commercial Treaty, as also for a special Treaty regulating the East Indian Trade, Lord Culpeper, Sir George Downing, and others.[2]

The Commissioners laboured at their task with their Dutch colleagues, and on December 1/11, 1674, they signed at London a Treaty Marine. It is not necessary to deal in detail with the technical points settled : suffice it to say that the Treaty continued the Pass system of the Breda peace, and of the Temple-De Witt Marine Treaty of 1668, but defined it far more carefully. The Pass system, in brief, prevented ships, by simply showing passports, from being searched for contraband by warships on either side. What was *not* contraband was much more carefully defined,

[1] See the terms of the Treaty in Chalmers' *Collection of Treaties*, I, 172–7.
[2] *Calendar of State Papers Dom.*, 1673–5, p. 287.

as were other points likely to give rise to question or dispute. Finally a special clause provided that the great trading Companies on both sides, and the Governors of Colonies on both sides, should with all speed be supplied with copies of the Treaty so as to take away any excuse for the future breach thereof. In comparing this Treaty clause by clause with the Temple-De Witt Treaty of 1668, I cannot escape the conclusion that the one represents the production of an excellent political philosopher who, in matters commercial, was as clay in the hands of the potter—De Witt, and the other the production of a man or men who understood Trade, who understood commercial psychology, and who knew that vagueness in Treaties is tantamount to vacuity.[1]

Three months later, on March 8/18, 1674/5, a brief Treaty, or rather Article, was signed by the same Commissioners touching the vital East Indian situation. The Commissioners state that they had been unable to agree on specific rules, but they laid it down that if either East Indian Company had a grievance against the other they should appeal direct to their Governments, who would —failing settlement—appoint Commissioners. If the Commissioners failed to agree, they, the Commissioners, were to nominate an Arbitrator, and if they failed to agree on an Arbitrator, then the Governments must settle the matter by hook or by crook. In any event, neither Company was on any account to take the law into its own hands.[2]

It is customary, and it is doubtless also correct, to assign the reason for the future maintenance of the peace between England and the Dutch mainly to the mutual realization that Louis XIV was the arch-enemy, and to the consequent alliance of the House of Orange and Stuart which, it should never be forgotten, was deliberately brought

[1] In case the reader should suspect me of prejudice in favour of Sir George Downing in this matter, I refer him to the text of the two Treaties in Chalmers' *Collection of Treaties*, I, 161–71 and 177–89.

[2] This Treaty will not be found in Chalmers, but it will be found in Dumont, *Corps Diplomatique*, VII, i, 288–9.

about by Charles II. But some credit for the maintenance of peace must also be given to the Commercial Treaties. It is an error to suppose that England emerged from the Dutch Wars superior to the Dutch in commercial power. This is not so. Until well into the beginning of the eighteenth century the Dutch were the supreme commercial power in the world.[1]

The second historic act with which Sir George Downing was connected was the arrangement made by Charles II and the great Lord Treasurer Danby—the Treasury had reverted from Commissioners for the time being—for the payment of interest on the Bankers Debt.

The reader will recall the financial situation at the end of 1671 as summarized in the chapter on the Treasury, and the Stop of the Exchequer to which that situation led. The Stop of the Exchequer has received much prominence in history textbooks, where it is represented as a typically shameless act of Charles II and his Ministers. On the other hand, the steps taken to repay, if not the loans, at least the interest on them, have been either altogether ignored or obscured. In July, 1674, the King paid two years' arrears of interest as a temporary measure. Then in April, 1676, Lord Treasurer Danby remitted the question of the permanent liquidation of the Debt to a special committee of financial experts including Sir George Downing and Sir Robert Howard, late Secretaries to the Treasury, and Mr. Bertie, the then Secretary, and two others. The Committee were to sit three days in each week till their report was finished.[2]

On February 8, 1677, Lord Treasurer Danby, having considered the report of the Committee, submitted a recommendation to the King in a masterly summary of the situation. He recommends the King to pay interest at 6 per

[1] Cunningham's *Growth of English Industry and Commerce*, Vol. II, p. 213 and footnote. "Never did the prestige of the States stand higher in Europe than at the opening of the 18th century": Edmundson's *History of Holland*, p. 298, see also p. 275.

[2] *Calendar of Treasury Books*, Vol. V, Pt. I, 42 and 201.

cent. on £1,365,000—the declared debt due to the Bankers including arrears of interest. On February 9 the King by Order in Council accepted the recommendation, and approved the charging of the Debt on the hereditary excise as from January 1, 1677.[1] Thus began the preliminary funding of the National Debt.

One further point in this connection is amusing. Lord Treasurer Danby asked advice of the Attorney-General, Sir George Downing and one or two others as to the precise method of payment: should the payment be made from the Exchequer, or direct on Tallies from the Excise. Sir George Downing recommended payment from the Exchequer. The Attorney-General bluntly suggested that that was because Sir George had his eye on the fees due to his office as Teller. Sir George denied it, and said it was the regularity of the system that he stood for. However, Lord Treasurer Danby evidently regarded Sir George's arguments as unsubstantial, for he concurred with the Attorney-General in adopting the method of direct payment from the Excise.[2]

It may be asked, how could the King possibly find the money to pay interest on the Bankers Debt, in view of the state of his revenue as explained in the chapter on the Treasury? The answer is, firstly, that between the years 1671 and 1681 the normal revenue averaged at least £1,200,000 (i.e. the figure the Commons thought they had voted in 1661), due, partly, to increased Customs and Excise Duties imposed by Parliament during those years, and partly to a trade revival in the middle years of that decade. Secondly, Lord Treasurer Danby was an administrator of courage and genius, and ruthlessly curtailed expenditure. It is notable that from December, 1675, the salaries of the Commissioners of Customs were apparently cut from £2,000 to £1,200 per annum.[3]

1 *Calendar of Treasury Books*, Vol. V, Pt. I, 542–6.
2 Id., Vol. V, Pt. I, 458–9: June 16, 1677.
3 Id., Vol. IV, p. 869. For Treasurer Danby's administration and the state of the Revenue from 1671 to 1685, see Dr. Shaw's prefaces to Vols. IV–VII.

After 1681, to the King's death in 1685, the normal revenue languished again, principally owing to the fact that the additional Excise and Customs duties lapsed after 1681. During these years, out of a normal revenue of approximately only £1,000,000, the King spent at least half on the Navy.[1]

It is fitting that the last view of Sir George Downing should be of him in the country, and as the father of a family. For in the midst of all the bustle and struggle of confused life in the world there are two unchanging fundamentals, the green earth, and the domestic hearth.

The letters of Lucy Downing will have given the reader some idea of the homely part of her son's life, and the only further light I can throw upon it will be by means of some stray family letters which have fortunately found their way into the manuscript department of the British Museum. If Sir George Downing as a country gentleman was not beloved by the villagers of East Hatley, and Pepys tells a laughable, though malicious, story of what in those days was accounted a niggardly Christmas dinner of nothing but "beef, porridge, pudding, and pork," which he gave on one occasion,[2] at least he seems to have been respected by his family and relations.

In the first place, the reader must know that Sir George Downing had eight children by his beautiful wife Frances Howard, three sons and five daughters. The sons were George, William, and Charles; the daughters were Frances, Philadelphia, Lucy, Mary, and Anne. Frances married the son and heir of Sir John Cotton, Bt., of Stratton Park, Bedfordshire; Philadelphia, Sir Henry Pickering, of Whaddon; Lucy, Sir Richard Bulkley, of Oldbarnes, Ireland; Mary, Thomas Barnardiston, Esq., of Bury St. Edmunds; and Anne, Francis Pengelly, Esq., of Whitchurch, Devon. Of his sons, the eldest, George, married Lady Katherine Cecil, daughter of the Earl of Salisbury; William died

[1] See the detailed figures at the beginning of Vol. VII, Pt. I, *Calendar of Treasury Books*.

[2] Pepys, *Diary*, Vol. VI, 188: Entry for February 27, 1666/7.

unmarried, and Charles married Sarah, daughter and co-heir of Jacob Garrod.[1]

It is noteworthy that George Downing the younger was a generous benefactor of Clare College, Cambridge, and it was his son, also George, who by his will left the whole of the Downing property, failing male or collateral male heirs, for the founding of a College in Cambridge.[2]

Though the letters which follow refer to Lady Downing, they give no description of her. That she and her husband lived in domestic happiness seems clear. She was with him during all the time of his diplomatic career at the Hague, and it was largely because of anxiety on her account that he left so suddenly in August, 1665, and not, as Wicquefort suggests, in order to avoid paying his debts.

In the last letter which he wrote from the Hague to Lord Clarendon on August 11/21, 1665, Downing explains that the arrest of his Secretary had alarmed his wife, who was within six weeks of a confinement : " She being very much frighted with these daily invasions of my family and the last time she was with child having miscarried of a fright and escaped very narrowly of her life." [3]

With Lady Downing's brother, the Earl of Carlisle, Downing seems to have been on the best of terms, and of the few domestic letters that have survived several are among certain Carlisle papers in the Sloane Manuscripts. Lord Carlisle was an extremely influential figure in the North of England, for he was Commander of the Northern forces, and Governor of Carlisle. It will be seen, from one or two of the letters, that Lord Carlisle made use of his relationship with Sir George Downing, Commissioner of Customs,

[1] I take these particulars from the Downing pedigree given by Mr. J. J. Muskett in his *Suffolk Manorial Families*, Vol. I, p. 99.

[2] See the Rev. H. W. Pettit Stevens's *Downing College*, published 1899, pp. 256–70. The Will of the third Sir George Downing, dated December 20, 1717, is there printed in full. The first Master of Downing College was, appropriately enough, a great-great-grandson of the first Sir George Downing.

[3] *B.M. Add. MSS.*, 22,920, ff. 178–9, copy of a letter to Lord Clarendon.

to place, or try to place, various protégés in various Customs posts.

Sir George Downing to the Earl of Carlisle : June ye 17th 1682.[1]

"My Lord

I have receid yor Lett^rs of the 12th of this month. This Afternoone Mr Coaker came to me and showed me the L^r of Attorney from yor Lo^pp for me to receive yor Jamaica money, and hee has promised to give me notice when it may be received, and then I will take care for the receiving of it accordingly. I will take care that nothing doe passe to the prejudice of Richd Story, but soe soone as his Tryall is over doe not faile to give me notice of the Issue thereof and what you will have me doe, for time is pretious in such cases, My humble Service to my Lord Morpeth, and Lett him know that I wrote lately to him, but that the L^re I have now received from him being only upon the same Acc^t with yor Lo^pps that I doe not trouble him wth any Answere, Referring him to wt is above written to you ; my Wife and I were last Sunday att Windsor where wee left the King very well—hee did eate mighty heartily; Wm is againe in waiting, the Small Pox came to him in a lucky time else he had probably beene Haddox meate ; my Wife and Lucy went hence yesterday for Hattley. I shall be glad to know whether yor Lopp intend to visit these parts next winter, and if soe, I hope I shall have a Doe for you to kill yourselfe att Gam'gay Park[2] ; I could have Kill'd (as my keeper told me) a fatt Buck by the middle of May ; wee have had the greatest Blasts this yeare in all places of Wall Fruite and Standard fruite that have beene knowne these many yeares ; My humble Service to my Lady Carlile and my Lady Morpeth ; When Yor Lopp and My Ld Morpeth doe write to me be pleas'd

[1] *B.M. Sloane MSS.*, 2723, f. 105.

[2] Gamlingay Park is a few miles from East Hatley, and was one of the numerous properties which Downing acquired in that part of Cambridgeshire.

to direct yor Lres to me Comr of the Customes att the Custome house London for by that meanes yor Leres come to me free and more safe and speedy, I am (My Lord) yor Lopps most faithfull Brothr and humble servt.

G. DOWNING."

Sir George Downing to the Earl of Carlisle : June 24, 1682, Custome House, London.[1]

" My Lord

Since myne to yr Lordship in answer to yrs about Story who is in prison in Scotland, Sr Philip Musgrave hath writt a Letter to ye Comrs acquainting ym wth wt hath befallen Story as to his being in prison for killing two men and desiring yt he may recommed one George Story [sic, but must be Graham] for ye employment, wch letter also was said to be ye desire of Col. Legge as well as Sr Chrystopher Musgrave, however I have stopped al proceedings there upon till an issue of ye tryall against Story : Wt this Graham is or how fitt or unfitt for ye employment or how [more] fitted or unfitted yn ye p'son mentioned in yr letter I know not but I find Sr Chrystopher will insist upon ye getting in this man, and we do not give these places at ye board but by turns, and you may be sure several of ye Comrs wil in their turns be willing to hearken to such a recommendation so pray let me heare further from you about this matter.

My Ld yr Ldships most faithful bro
and humble serv.

G. DOWNING.

Moreover if ye p'son recommended by you shold be presented to be sure Sr Chrystopher will sollicitt ye Lds of ye Treasury against it, and yr Ldship is absent, and I know not who will sollicitt from [for] him, we can't solicitt we can only present. I have presented Pickerd at last for a Colewayrer at Newcastle wch is ye employment he desired."

1 *B.M. Sloane MSS.*, 2723, f. 104.

The Earl of Carlisle to Sir George Downing: Henderskelfe, 26 Sept., 1682.[1]

. . . I am glad my sister hath her health my limbs are weak and fingers crooked but I make a shift to ride : yesterday I was six hours on horseback ; for my coming up I canot yet resolve to leave this place having my health better than I have had for severall years, but how the could weather will agree with me I know not ; iff I have the call of privy counsellor or a parl^mt to attend, it would make me jog, but I doe nott yet take pleasure in perfect idlenes,

I am

y^r most affectionate
brother and servant
CARLISLE."

Sir George Downing to the Earl of Carlisle: 9^ber 21 [i.e. November], 1682, Custom House, London.[2]

". . . I am very glad yt my Ld Morpeth is on ye mending hand and yt we are like to be so happy as to see him and my Lady speedily heer. About 1500 houses burnt about Wappin on Sunday night and yesterday, occasioned by a Sawyer making merry in his house and throwing much sawdust on ye fire, My humble service to my Lady, I am etc."

In a postcript to a letter to Lord Carlisle dated October 14, 1682, on business matters, Sir George Downing says :

" The business of my building keeps my wife still at Hatley she writes me word she is now finely well and very hearty."

George Downing the younger to his Uncle, the Earl of Carlisle : July 29, 1682 (?) Paris.[3]

" My Lord

I should never pardon my self ye neglect, did I forbeare giving you this trouble, and knowing if you have any thing

[1] *B.M. Add. MSS.*, 22,920, f. 214.
[2] *Sloane MSS.*, 2724, f. 159.
[3] Id., 2724, f. 162.

to command me here. For though their are many would be proud to serve your Lopp : and would performe better than I can, yet none I am sure shal showe greater willingnesse and more Sincerityе as none can have more reason. I wish you all ye recreations ye Countrye affords and I hope Buck hunting will keepe offe one fitt of ye goute att Least, Pray my Lord give me leave to present my humble service to my Lady Carlisle. I am glad to heare your Lopp will passe this winter att London, where I hope to have ye honour of telling you more att large how much

I am your Lopps
most humble servt
G. DOWNING."

Sir John Fenwick to his Father-in-Law, the Earl of Carlisle :
September 27, 1682 (?) [1]

"My Lord

I make bold to give y^r^ Lor^dp^ this trouble in the behalfe of this bearer Mr Ralph Archbold, for whome I intreat y^r^ Lor^sp^ to speake to Sr George Downing that he may have the Landwaiter and Searchers place at the porte of Barwick, in wch place Mr George Selby Lately died, the father-in-law of this Mr Archbold. I intreat yr Lor^sp^ doe him all the favour you can in this busines, and also to prevent one Charles Jackson a Servt to Capt: Ralph Widdrington from getting of it, who is now endeavouring for it. Yr Lorsp's kindness in this will infinitely oblige yr most obedient Sonn and Servt

J. FENWICKE."

George Downing the younger to his Father, Sir George Downing :
Nov. ye 26, [16]82, Grenoble.[2]

"Sr

I have two from you of October 13 and Nov^bere^ ye 2 and noe more I am very sorry to heare you have beene ill I hope itt will not continue I am also very sorry

[1] *Sloane MSS.*, f. 166.
[2] *B.M. Add. MSS.*, 22,920, ff. 218–19.

to heare my brother should have done any thing to displease you I dare sweare what he has done was not dessigned and he is concerned for itt as tis possible to be. I have sent you eight vines from mompelier they are to come with a case of wine for my self from Mr fargeon a portales merchante att mompelier for (?) Mr de la Vere merchant att London. Ye vines are of ye earlyest sorte six make (?) half read and half white and two espirante vines I supose they may be in England as soon as this letter, therefore pray Sr enquire about them I have ordered my cosen peter to pay for ye wine and bring itt to my house pray Sr be pleased to direct him ye best way to gett itt that itt may not be charged. I left Sr Harry at toulon whoe went thence for Italy where I mett my Cosen ffred with whom I am returning for paris.

I am very glad ye new building goes on soe well, and that you have had so good frute and so good weather and that gamlingay parke is so sweete a place still : Wee have had rainye weather this week and I have beene where ye snowe is A yard high, grafting vines is certainly ye best way in ye world. I thank you for your news. I have not heard from my brother William these three monthes nor a word from Sr John Chichelye wh a little Concernes me. I am very sorry my mother has beene ill I hope in God twil goe over. I have also sent you from marseilles by Thomas Robartts of yarmouth bound for London on ye recompence A box wch has in itt 200 tubereuse roots, 200 Jonquiloes, 100 animones, 100 ronquilloes half for Sr Harry and half for you all paide but ye poste moreover six white and six read figues twelve vines of ye earlyest sorts viz muscat and madelaine sea, fower peaches madelaine fower perdrigone plums and fower of their great Cherrye wch is A very extraordinary frute half for Sr Harry and half for you, and six Cassie trees for you wch you are to nurse up more Carefully than orange trees for they have ye sweetest flower in ye world and are to be housed like orange trees and planted in boxes all these things are paide for. but you are to satisfie ye Capt whoe promised me he would take all

Imaginable care of them for your sake and he expects your thancks ; moreover some melon seed and belle de nuit wch is A mighty pretty flower.

I am
Sr
Your most dutt [iful ?] and obe :
son and Servt
G. DOWNING."

This letter was evidently forwarded by Sir George Downing to Lady Downing in the country. There is an illegible scrawl in his hand saying, apparently, that the parcels had not yet arrived, and on the outside of the envelope are the words " how hygh ye winds are."

With this charming letter from the younger George Downing—permeated with the scent of flowers and the sun of Grenoble—to his father, it will be fitting to bring this biography to a close. From various references in the *Calendars of Treasury Books* and *State Papers Colonial* it is clear that Sir George Downing was in active, and even ceaseless, official labour as a Commissioner of Customs as late as the month of April, 1684, ten weeks before his death. After April we hear nothing more of him, till the end came.

May passed, and June, and the gardens of Gamlingay, and the pleasant countryside around, were bathed in the glory of high summer. But the hour was at hand when, for Sir George Downing, the summer sun and the frost of winter would matter not at all ; no longer would he observe how high the winds were, or whether that sweet flower *belle de nuit* scented the evening air. For his restless spirit there would be, at last, rest, and instead of endless activities, counsellings and speeches there would be the profound peace of the grave. It was early in July, 1684, that he died.[1] He was buried in the chancel of Croydon

[1] Narcissus Luttrell (*Brief Relation*, I, 313), under date July 11, 1684, refers to Sir George Downing as " lately dead." He was not buried, apparently till July 24, when he is certified as " buried in sheep's wool only affidavit

Church, in the County of Cambridge, by the side of his faithful wife Frances, who had died just a year before him.

No sepulchral monument in the remote and beautiful village church of Croydon commemorates the extraordinary career of Sir George Downing. Nevertheless, his life has permanently recorded itself in the history of England. The words of Coleridge are true :

> "But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,
> Shall wholly do away, I ween,
> The marks of that which once hath been."

being made before Sr R. Cotton, K^t^." (from information kindly supplied me by the Rector of Croydon, the Rev. H. Lloyd, who also confirms that Lady Downing died in the preceding year, being similarly buried in sheep's wool, July 23, 1683). Burial in sheep's wool was compulsory by statute of 1666 (18 C. II, c. 4), re-enforced in 1678, the object being the encouragement of the wool industry. See Cunningham's *Growth of English Industry and Commerce*, Vol. II, p. 393 footnote.

APPENDIX A

(From Sir George Downing's MS. Journal, ff. 3–5.)

MY FIRST SPEECH IN THE STATES GEN^{LL}.

Audience in the States Generall 28 Janu : 165$\frac{7}{8}$

High and mighty Lords

It noe sooner pleased God to raise my Master the Protector of England Scotland and Ireland etc : to that State and Dignity wherein he now is but he forthwith applyed himself to a due and through consideration of affaires as they then stood betweene those Nations over which God had placed him and you of the Netherland. Impatient that they who had continued in ffriendship and Amity for so long a time, and had bin not onely Mutuall helps to each other upon all occasions but as a Comon Bulwark against the designes and strength of theire Comon Enimies, should be engaged each against other to the Mutuall weakening each of other, and exposeing themselves theire trade theire Religion Protestant friends and Allyes to comon Ruine doing that themselves for their Enimies which they neither by bloody Inquisitions Banishments Confiscations Treacheries or force of Armes could effect while theise two States stood in Mutual ffriendship and Amity each with other.

And my Lords I assure you my Master deemes it amongst the first Ranke of mercyes from heaven bestowed upon him that it pleased God at that time so to bless his Joynt endeavours with those of yor Ldps as that thereby those Issues of blood were so timely stopt.

And as what was then done was not out of necessity or constraint but upon the forementioned grounds, so hee retaynes still an earnest and hearty desire of a continuation of all Amicableness and ffreindship with you.

And findeing that the same Interest is now more then ever at worke, and that not onely by fforce of Armes and all Imaginable Crueltyes but especially by raising Jealousies and differences amongst those of the reformed and Protestant Religion, whose Civill and Religious concernments oblige them to preserve and continue Amity and friendship each with other, and that they have therein so farr

prevayled as to have engaged some Protestant Princes in bloody and dangerous warrs one against another, and to render the wounds Incurable, are endeavouring by Leagues and Confedderacyes to exclude all possibility of reconciliation.

And not doubting but that the same Artifices or more (if possible) are on foote to raise Jealousies and differences betweene my Master and the United Provinces whom God hath Inabled above all others whilst friends to doe most Good and whilst Enemies most Mischeif each to other and who in a manner are now alone left in a Capacity of Mediating betweene Protestants now at Variance, and of giveing relief and succour to others now in distress and misery so that if this theire Designe by any meanes or under any collour or pretext whatsoever should take effect, (which God forbid) what could then hinder an Universall Empire over our Estates Libertyes Religion friends and Allyes so Long contended for !

Upon these considerations my Master hath sent me at this time to yor Ldps and hath comanded me to lett you know that he is most sincerely resolved to maintayne Inviolably on his part the Peace made by him with you and not onely so but by all meanes to endeavour to growe up into a more entire confidence and nearer and stricter alliance and Confederacy with you, and that all endeavours used to begett Jealousyes take noe place with him as being wholly averse from any such Impressions.

And he hath further Comanded me to assure you that he will accordingly not onely Governe his private affaires at home but also even in all fforreigne transactions with any other Prince or State he will proceede upon such grounds as may manifest theise his most sincere thoughts and Intentions towards you, and in fine omitt nothing which may any way give a reall and hearty demonstration thereof.

So that if the same thoughts be in you The High and Mighty Lords the States Gen^{ll} of the United Provinces whose Interests are the same with his there is noe doubt to be made but that (Maugre all Plotts and Contrivances of our Enemies) Theise Nations will by the blessing of God continue in peace and Amity each with other fflourish in trade and Comerce grow up dayly to a nearer Conjunction in matters of Religion (the late Hierarchy in England the grand obstacle thereof being abollished) and be still a help and succour to the Comon freinds ; and a terrour to the Comon Enimies of both.

ffinally my Lords touching my self give me leave to say thus much

that I beare a true and particuler affeccon unto the wellfare of this State, That it shalbe my endeavour throughout in the management of this affaire to make good this my profession towards you, and wherein I shall unwittingly err or come short I trust to find yor favourable construction and Pardon.

G: DOWNING.

APPENDIX B

(*From B.M. Add. MSS.* 22,919, *f.* 78.)

LETTER FROM ANDREW MARVELL TO GEORGE DOWNING, DATED FROM WHITEHALL, FEB. 11, 1658[9]

Sir

Mr Secretary being something tired with Parliament and other businesse hath commanded me to give you some account of what hath passed in the house this weeke. Upon Munday the Bill for recognition of his Highnesse was red the second time. Thereupon the House entered into that debate and all hath been said against it which could be by Sr Arthur Haslerig, Sir Henry Vane, Mr Weaver, Mr Scott, Mr St Jo(?) Nicholas, Mr Reinolds, Sr Antony Ashly Cooper, Major Packer, Mr Henry Neville, Milord Lambert, and many more. Their doctrine hath moved most upon their maxime that all pow'r is in the people, that it is reversed into this house by the death of his Highnesse, that Mr Speaker is Protector in possession and it will not be his wisdome to part with it easily, that this house is all England. Yet they pretend that they are for a single person and this single person, but without negative voice, without militia, not upon the petition and advice but by adoption and donation of this House and that all the rights of the people should be specified and indorsed upon that donation. But we know well enough what they mean. A Petition from some thousands in the City to their purpose hath been brought in (and they say they are trying to promote another in the Army) but laid by to be red at the end of this debate in which nothing is to intervene. They have held on to it all this weeke and get litle nearer. It was propounded on our side seeing the whole bill stuck so, that before the Commitment of it it should be voted in the house as part of it that his Highnesse is Protector etc. and not to passe but wish the whole bill. But all we could gaine hitherto is that their shall be a previous vote before the Commitment but yt that shoulde be it is yet as farre of as ever. For they speak eternally to the question, to the orders of the house, and in

all the tricks of Parliament. They have much the odds in speaking but it is to be hoped that our justice, our affection and our number which is at least two thirds will weare them out at the long runne. This is all that I can tell you at present but that I am

Sir, your most humble servt.,

ANDREW MARVELLE.

Whitehall, Feb. 11, 1658[9].

APPENDIX C

(*P.C.C.* 139 *Hare, Somerset House.*)

SIR GEORGE DOWNING'S WILL

In the Name of God Amen I Sir George Downing of East Hatley in the County of Cambridge Knight and Baronett doe this fower and Twentieth day of August in the yeare of our Lord One Thousand six hundred Eighty and Three make and ordaine this my last will and Testament in manner following I bequeath my Soule into the hands of God who gave hoping that through the merritts and intercession of his only Sonne my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ he will receive the same into his eternall mercy and happinesse And my body which I believe shall be raised againe I commend the same to be decentlie interred in the vault which I have made under the Chauncell at Crawden alʂ Croyden in the County of Cambridge and to be there disposed by the body of my late dearely beloved wife Frances Downing And as for and concerning my Temporall Estate I give and dispose of the same in manner following Whereas I have power to settle and appoint certain Lands and Tenements in Y^e^ County of Cambridge assured or agreed to be assured among other uses to the use of my sonne George Downing Esquire for the Term of Nyntie nine yeares if he soe long live of the yearely value of ffower hundred pounds to the use and behoofe of such person as I should nominate and appoint by writing under my hand certifyed by two or more witnesses in that behalfe or by my last will and Testament in writing signed and published by mee in the presence of three or more witnesses for and during the naturall life of such person Now by vertue of the said power and by vertue of all and every other power and powers to mee in that behalfe reserved I doe hereby nominate and appoint that all my Lands in Swaffham, Bullbeck and Swaffeham Prior in the said Countie of Cambridge (other then and except the Lands and Tenements in the occupation of John Clarke and Thomas Smith and alsoe all my lands in Botisham alʂ Botsam in the said County of Cambridge now in the occupation of Nicholas Lawrence and Richard Taylor which lands in Swafham Bulbeck

Swafham Prior and Botisham als Botsam hereby appointed are of the yearly value of fower hundred pounds or thereabouts shall be from and after my decease to the use of my sonne William during the term of his natural life and as to for and concerning my houses in or near King Str in the city of Westminster in the County of Middlesex lately called Hampden House which I hold by a long lease from the Crown and Peacock Court there near adjoining which I hold by lease from the Collegiate Church of St Peter Westminster all which are now demolished and rebuilt or rebuilding and called Downing Streete I doe give devise and bequeathe unto Edward Lord Vicount Morpeth and Sir Henry Pickering baronett my soninlaw their executors administrators and assignes to have and to hold the same unto them the said Edward Lord Vicount Morpeth and Sir Henry Pickering theire executors administrators and assignes from and after my decease for and during all the rest and residue which shall be then to come and unexpired of my severall Leases and termes or yeares therein upon such Trust and with and under such Provisoes and limitations and to and for such intents and purposes as are herein mentioned and expressed that is to say upon Trust that they the said Edward Lord Vicount Morpeth and Sir Henry Pickering theire executors administrators and assignes shall and doe permitt and suffer my sonne Charles Downing during the continuance of certaine Leases for yeares of and in the same premises w^h^ I have made and am about to make to the respective builders thereof commencing and to commence on or about Lady Day one thousand six hundred eightie and two if he the said Charles shall soe long live to receive and take the rents issues and proffitts of the same houses and premisses to and for his own use and benefitt And if my said sonne Charles shall happen to dye unmarried during the continuance of the same leases Then shall and doe permitt and suffer my sonne William Downing his Executors Administrators and assignes during the continuance of the same leases respectively to receive and take the rents and proffitts of the same houses and premisses to and for his and theire owne use and benefitt provided alwaies and my minde and will is that in case my said sonnes Charles and William or any issue of their bodies begotten shall be alive at time of the expiration of the same leases Then upon this further Trust that they the said Edward Lord Vicount Morpeth and Sir Henry Pickering theire Executors Administrators and Assignes shall and doe permitt and suffer my said sonne William his Executors and adstrators during all the residue which shall be then to come and unexpired of my

lease and terme of yeares of and in all those foure greate houses being parcell of the premises held of the crowne fronting Saint James Parke West and North together with the Stables and Coachhouses thereto belonging or therewith used to Receive and take the Rents issues and proffitts thereof and of everie part thereof to and for his and theire owne use and benefitt he and they paying the Rent which shall from time to time become due and payable for and in respect thereof and of other the premisses held of the Crowne to the King and his successors and the Housekeeper of Whitehall for the time being and shall and doe permitt and suffer the said Charles and his Execut[rs] and Administrators during all the residue which shall be then to come and unexpired of my said severall leases and Termes for yeares of and in all and singular the premisses before mentioned to be held of the Crowne and Church (other than and except the said fower messuages with the appurtenances fronting Saint James Parke and other the premisses limited to the said William as aforesaid) to take and receive the rents issues and proffitts thereof and of every part thereof to and for his and theire owne use and benefitt he and they paying the Rent and fines which shall from time to time become due and payable for and in respect thereof and for the renewing of the same to the Collegiate Church of St. Peter Westminster provided alsoe and my minde and will is that if the said William or any of issue of his body shall not be liveing att the time of the expiration of the respective leases to the builders aforemencõed (liveing the said Charles or some issue of his body) then shall and doe permitt and suffer the said Charles his Executors and administrators during all the residue which shall be then to come and unexpired of the said Crowne and Church leases of and in the same houses and premisses to receive and take the rents issues and proffitts of all and every the same houses and premisses to and for his and theire owne use and benefitt paying the rents and fines payable for the same as aforesaid provided likewise and my minde and will is that if the said Charles or any issue of his body shall not be liveing at the tyme of the expiration of the respective leases to the builders before mentioned (liveing the said William or some issue of his body) then shall and doe permitt and suffer the said William his Executors and Administrators during all the residue which shall be then to come and unexpired of the said Crowne and Church leases of and in the same houses and premisses to receive and take the rents issues and proffitts of all and every the same houses and premisses to and for his and theire owne use and benefitt paying the rents and fines to

be payable for the same as aforesaid provided alsoe and my mind and will is that if they the sd. William and Charles ore ither of them or any issue of theire or either of theire bodies shall not be then liveing (liveing the said George Downing my sonne or some issue of his bodie) Then shall and doe permitt and suffer the said George Downing my sonne his Executors administrators and assignes during all the residue which shall be then to come and unexpired of the same severall leases and Termes of yeares to receive and take the Rents and proffitts of all and singular the same houses and premisses to and for his and theire owne use and benefitt paying the said rents and fines to be payable for the same as aforesaid provided alwaies neverlesse and my minde and will is that in case none of my said sonnes George William and Charles nor any of theire yssues of theire or any of theire bodies shall be then liveing then upon Trust that the said Edward Lord vicount Morpeth and Sir Henry Pickering theire Executors Administrators and assignes shall from thenceforth stand and be possessed of all and singular the premisses held by lease as aforesaid in trust for and for the only benefitt of such person and persons whoe should then have right of administration to mee in case I had dyed intestate other then and except such woeman as then shall or may happen to be my wife or Relict during all the residue which shall be then to come and unexpired of the same leases and termes of yeares as to for and concerning all and every other my lands Tenements and hereditaments whereof noe devise or bequest is hereinbefore made or which I have not setled or assured or agreed to settle and assure to the use of my said sonne George and the issue male of his body upon his marriage with the lady Katherine his wife And alsoe as to for and concerning the porcon which I am to receive by reason of the said marriage and all other my moneys bonds debts goods Chattells credditts and personall Estate whatsoever (other then such part thereof as is hereinafter by mee specifically given) after my funerall charges debts and other Legacies shall be thereout paid and discharge[d] I doe give devise and bequeath the same unto the said Edward Lord Vicount Morpeth and Sir Henry Pickering theire heires Executors and Administrators respectively To have and to hold the same unto them the said Lord Vicount Morpeth and Sir Henry Pickering theire Executors and Administrators respectively to the use of them theire heires Executors and Administrators respectively upon such Trusts and to and for such intents and purposes as are hereinafter mentioned and expressed (that is to say) upon Trust that they the said Lord Vicount Morpeth and Sir Henrie Pickering theire

heires Executors and Administrators shall and doe thereby and there with and by such wayes and meanes as they shall thinke fitt raise such summe and summes of money for the portions and maintenance of my Three daughters Lucy Mary and Anne as are hereinafter for that purpose mentioned and expressed that is to say the Summe of fower thousand pounds for the portion of my said daughter Lucy the summe of two thousand pounds for the portion of my said daughter Mary and the summe of two Thousand pounds for the portion of my said daughter Anne the said porc̄ons to be paid to them respectively as and when they shall respectively attaine theire respective ages of one and twenty yeares or be married which shall first happen and in the meantime and untill theire said portions shall become payable such yearely summes of money for theire respective maintenance and education as are hereinafter mentioned and expressed (That is to say) the yearly summe of one hundred pounds for the maintenance and education of my said daughter Lucy, the yearly summe of one hundred pounds for the maintenance and education of my said daughter Mary And the yearely Summe of one hundred pounds for the maintenance and education of my said daughter Anne the said yearely summes for maintenance to be paid halfe yearly Provided alwaies and my minde and will is that if any of my said daughters shall happen to die before her or theire said portion or portions shall become payable by vertue of these presents Then I will that the portion or portions of her or them soe dyeing shall goe and be paid unto and be equally devided betweene the survivours or survivour of them at such time when the originall portion or portions of such survivours or survivour shall become payable Provided alsoe and my minde and will further is that in case all my said daughters shall happen to dye before anie of theire said portions shall become payable then the said summes of money before appoynted for theire portions shall cease and not be raised or if the same or any part thereof shall be raised shall be paid unto and be equally devided betweene my said sonnes William and Charles or the survivour of them or their respective Executours or adstrators And upon this further trust that they the said Lord Vicount Morpeth and Sir Henry Pickering theire heires Executours and Administrators shall and doe dispose of and convey all the residue and overplus of the said lands Tenements moneys personall Estate and premisses hereinbefore to them given and devised as aforesaid as shall remaine after my debts funerall expences and the said portions maintenance and other my legacies shall be raised as aforesaid unto my said sonnes William and Charles theire

heires Executorus Administrat[rs] Item I give and devise all my Lands Tenements and hereditaments in New England to my said sonne Charles and the heires of his bodie lawfully to be begotten and for default of such issue then to my said sonne William and the heires of his bodie lawfully to be begotten and for default of such issue then to my said sonne George and the heires of his bodie lawfully to be begotten and for default of such issue then to my owne right heires And I doe hereby give committ and appoynte the Guardianshipp tuition and custodie of my said sonnes William and Charles and of theire respective Estates untill theire respective ages of one and twentie yeares unto the said Lord Vicount Morpeth and Sir Henry Pickering and the survivour of them and the Executors of such survivor and alsoe the Guardianshipp tuition and custodie of the persons of my said daughters Lucie Mary and Anne unto my dear daught[r] Frances Cotton but the Custody Guardianship and management of theire Estates to the said Lord Vicount Morpeth and Sir Henry Picering and the survivour of them Item I give and bequeath unto my said daughter Cotton the summe of fiftie pounds and to each of her children Francis John and Thomas the summe of Twentie pounds apeece and to Elizabeth and Frances the two daughters of my late daughter Pickering deceased the summe of Twentie pounds apeece provided alwayes and my minde and will is that my daughter Lucy shall have all my rings and Jewells Item I give to my nephew John Peters the summe of Tenn pounds Item I give to my neece Lucy Spicer the summe of Tenn pounds Item I give to my nephew Joshua Downing the summe of tenn pounds Item I give to Mr. Edmund Woodroffe one of my Clerkes in my Office in the Exchequer the summe of Twentie pounds Item I give to the aforesaid Edward Lord Vicount Morpeth and Sir Henry Pickering Twenty pounds a peece Item I give to everyone of my houshold serva[ts] halfe a yeares wages Item I give to the poore of the parish of Saint Margaretts Westminster the summe of Twentie pounds Item I give to the poore of the parish of Croyden in the said County of Cambridge the summe of Tenn pounds Item I give to the poore of the parish of East Hatley aforesaid the summe of Tenn pounds And lastly I doe hereby make ordaine constitute and appoynte the said Lord Vicount Morpeth and Sir Henry Pickering Executors of this my last will and Testament and doe hereby revoke all and every other will and wills by mee at any time heretofore made In Witnesse whereof I have hereunto sett my hand and seale the day and yeare above written G :Downing The writing within contained

was by the within named Sir George Downing signed and sealed and by him published and declared as and for his last will and Testament in the presence of us who have hereunder written our names in the presence of the said Sir George Downing after the interlining of the words (and Thomas Smith) in one place and the words (and Fines to be) in Two places and the words (and Twenty pounds) in an other place And the words (my sonne in law) in another place : Rob; Squibb jun^{r}, Jas; English, Henry Peacock, Thomas Trigge, Robert Munger.

Upon further Consideration of this my Will I have thought fitt to make the following alterations herein (videlicet) Whereas by my said will I have given to my sonne William ffower hundred pounds per Annum or thereabouts during his life out of my lands in Swafhem Bulbeck Swafhem Prior and Botisham in the County of Cambridge now for the bettering the portions of my three Daughters my will is that the summes of money directed by my said will to be paid to them for theire respective maintenances shall not be paid to them by my Trustees therein named But that my sonne William doe pay to my daughter Lucy the summe of one hundred and twenty pounds per annum untill her marriage or death which shall first happen And to my daughter Mary the summe of one hundred pounds untill her day of death or marriage whether shall first happen if he soe long live But if he happen to die before such time respectively, Then in such case theire maintenances to be paid to them by my Trustees as in my will is directed My will alsoe is That one hundred pounds per Annum be paid to my daughter Anne for her maintenance out of the rents and proffitts and my buildings in Kings Street Westminster by my sonne Charles or such other of my sonnes to whome the same shall come untill she shall be married or die whither shall first happen And I doe appoynt all the said Annuities to be paid Quarterly to my said three daughters from my decease The first payment to be upon the first of Y^{e} ffower usuall Quarter dayes of payment which shall happen next after my decease And I doe give to my said three daughters power of distresse for non payment of theire said annuities within Thirtie dayes after the same shall be due to them or any of them : G: Downing. The writing above was signed sealed published and declared to be farther part of the last will and Testament of Sir George Downing by him in our presence whoe have heretofore sett our hands in the presence of the said Sir George this seaventh day of July 1684 Robert Squibb sen^{r} N: Dering Arnold Squibb

Proved with Codicil annexed 19 July 1684 by Sir Henry Pickering: Power being reserved of making a similar grant to Edward Lord Vicount Morpeth.

17 Sep 1684 proof by the said Edward Lord Vicount Morpeth & grant issued to him.

APPENDIX D

DOCUMENTS RELATING TO DOWNING STREET

(Extracted from the Calendar of Treasury Books, by permission of The Controller, H.M. Stationery Office.)

From Calendar of Treasury Books, Vol. VII, Pt. I, pp. 135–6

April 2 1681 [sic erratum for *May* 2]. Treasury reference to William Harbord, Surveyor General of Crown Lands, of the petition of Sir George Downing for a fresh lease for 99 years of a messuage in Westminster, situate at the north end of King Street next the gate there and adjoining the Cockpit and St. James's Park, lately known by the name of Hambden House, together with all the buildings, yards, gardens, orchards and appurtenances thereto belonging, formerly in lease to Sir Tho. Knivet, Kt., for his natural life and 60 years thereafter, and of which a lease under the great seal dated 1663–4, Feb. 23, was granted to said Downing in reversion to make up 99 years therein : the rent being £20 per an. payable to the Crown, and £4 per an. payable to the keeper of Whitehall during the said 60 years, and £4 per an. increase during the remainder of said term of 99 years, whereof 14 are now expired. Downing's said former lease gave liberty to build upon the premises as far as the west end of the Cockpit then extended. For as much as the Cockpit is since pulled down and several other great houses and buildings lately erected more westward than the said Cockpit then stood, and the houses upon petitioner's part being all ruinous and decayed must be all rebuilt, he therefore prays to have his term made up again to 99 years at the old and increased rent and with liberty now and at all times hereafter to build upon any part of the premises : he intending to erect none that shall have a prospect towards the Park but such as shall be fit for persons of good quality to inhabit in and be graceful and ornamental to the said Park.

Appending : (*a*) The King's reference to the Treasury dated April 25 of the said petition. (*b*) A later reference dated May 11 to Sir Christopher Wren, Surveyor General of the Works, of the

report hereon from the Surveyor General of Crown Lands. Wren is to report if there will be any inconvenience to the King by Downing's so building.

Jan. 25 1681–2 (pp. 379–80). Royal Warrant to the Attorney or Solicitor General for a great seal to grant to Sir George Downing, Bart., authority to build new and more houses further westward on the grounds granted to him by the patent of 1663–4, Feb. 23, which granted to him all that messuage or house in Westminster, with all the courts, gardens and orchards thereto, situate between a certain house or mansion called the Peacock in part and the common sewer in part on the South side and a gate leading to King Street called the New Gate in part, and an old passage leading to a court called Pheasant Court in part, and an old passage leading from the great garden to St. James's Park in part, on the North side, and abutting on King Street on the East side and upon the wall of St. James's Park on the West side : to be held by said Downing for 99 years, including the unexpired portion of the 60 years' term granted in the premises to Sir Thomas Knevett by King James I ; with liberty to build thereon subject to the supervision of the Surveyor General of Crown Lands and with proviso not to build further than the West part of the house called the Cockpit was then built. The present grant is by reason that the said Cockpit or the greater part thereof is since demolished ; but is to be subject to the proviso that it be not built any nearer than 14 feet of the wall of the said Park at the West end thereof. But with liberty also to him to build vaults or cellars from the said buildings to the wall of the said Park & to make a walk thereupon, and also with liberty to him to cope the wall of the said Park (so far as the same does abutt on the premises) with free stone and set flower pots or statues thereupon for the beautifying and ornament of the said buildings. The abovesaid former grant to Downing is hereby also confirmed.

Calendar of Treasury Books. Vol. V, Pt. I, p. 613. 1677 May 3.

Royal Warrant to the Attorney or Solicitor General for a great seal for a grant to Sir Walter St. John, of Liddiard Tregooze, Co. Wilts, Bart., Sir Ralph Verney, of Middle Claydon, Bucks, Kt. and Bart., Sir Richd. How, of Wishford, Co. Wilts, Bart., John Cary, of Woodstock, Co. Oxford, and their executors and assigns of that parcel of ground with the building thereon within St. James's Park, bounded eastward with the buildings of the Cockpit, southwards with the wall of Hampden Garden, northward 140 foot in

length to the park, westward 85 foot in length to the park, with all ways, easiments and appurtenances thereto, to hold for 99 years from date of said great seal in trust for Henry, Earl of Lichfield, Dame Charlotte his wife and Dame Elizabeth Bertie, one of the daughters of the Earl of Lindsay, Great Chamberlain of England ; at the yearly rent of 6*s.* 8*d.* : with a clause for reassumption to the Crown upon payment to the lessees of what shall be *by them* [struck out] expended in building. (Treasurer Danby's subscription dated May 28 of docquet hereof.)

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[*I am indebted to* Mrs. K. A. PATMORE *for this Index.*]

n. before page numbers refers to selected notes and commentary of Author at foot or in text.

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